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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

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Teen assaulted over Marathi dies by suicide

THANE, 21 NOV

A Thane student, Arnav Khaire, 19, tragically died by suicide following a brutal assault on a train for speaking Hindi instead of Marathi. Before his death, he told his father, Jitendra Khaire, "They beat me up." Arnav was attacked after asking a fellow passenger in Hindi to move forward. "Are you ashamed to speak Marathi?" the assailants demanded before assaulting him. Unable to attend classes due to trauma, he returned home early. Jitendra found his son hanging after noticing his room was bolted. Police have registered an Accidental Death Report, with no arrests made. This incident highlights ongoing tensions between Marathi and Hindi speakers, echoing broader concerns of student suicides linked to bullying and harassment. *—Agencies*

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Please call Tele Manas at 14416, or SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support

India ushers in labour reforms to better workforce

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

In a landmark move, the government on Friday implemented the four Labour Codes, pending since 2020, introducing worker-friendly measures like a timely minimum wage for all and universal social security, including gig and platform workers, while allowing longer work hours, broader fixed-term employment, and employer-friendly retrenchment rules. While the four Labour Codes, the Code of Wages (2019, Industrial Relations Code (2020), Code on Social Security (2020) and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code (2020), which were passed five years back, were notified on Friday to replace 29 fragmented laws.

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Tremors felt in Bengal as 5.7 quake hits B'desh

KOLKATA, 21 NOV

A 5.7-magnitude earthquake in Bangladesh's Narsingdi district sent tremors across West Bengal and parts of Northeast India on Friday morning, the National Centre for Seismology reported. The quake struck at 10.08am, with its epicenter located 13km south-southwest of Narsingdi at a depth of 10km. Tremors were felt in several areas, including Kolkata and Guwahati, prompting many people to leave their homes and workplaces as a precaution. *—PTI*

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US sanctions Indian firms over Iranian oil trade

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, 21 NOV

The Trump administration has imposed sanctions on several India-based entities and individuals for their alleged involvement in purchasing and transporting Iranian petroleum products. The US State and Treasury Departments said these networks help fund Tehran's regional proxies and weapons programmes, which Washington calls a direct threat to American interests. Indian nationals Zair Husain Iqbal Husain Sayed and Zulfikar Hussain Rizvi Sayed, along with Maharashtra-based RN Ship Management Pvt Ltd and Pune-based TR6 Petro India LLP, have been added to the US Treasury's sanctions list. *—PTI*

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Visuals show Tejas jet sharply losing altitude during a low-level manoeuvre before crashing to the ground and erupting into a fireball during its Dubai Air Show display *PHOTO: PTI*

Tejas jet crashes in Dubai, pilot dead

The jet lost altitude amid a low-level manoeuvre before crashing

DUBAI/NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

The pilot of an Indian Air Force (IAF) Tejas fighter jet was killed on Friday after the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) crashed in a ball of fire during an aerial display at the Dubai Air Show. The fatal accident cast a tragic shadow over the final day of the event.

The pilot was identified as Wg Cdr Namansh Syal, who is in his mid-30s and hails from Himachal Pradesh, according to available accounts.

This is the second crash involving the Tejas in 20 months. The previous incident occurred in March last year in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, when another LCA went down, though the pilot had managed to eject safely. Both aircraft were manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL), the state-run aerospace major.

The pilot of the Tejas jet was Wg Cdr Namansh Syal, in his mid-30s, who hailed from Himachal Pradesh *PHOTO: X/ @SUKHUSUKHVINDER, PTI*

Dramatic visuals aired by TV channels showed the aircraft sharply losing altitude during what appeared to be a low-level manoeuvre before plunging into the ground within seconds, erupting into a massive fireball. Thick black smoke rose above the Al Maktoum International Airport at Dubai World Central as spectators, including families seated in the grandstand behind a fenced-off section of the airstrip, watched in shock.

The single-engine fighter crashed at around 3.40 pm IST. The pilot, whose identity has not yet been released, had been performing an eight-minute demonstration flight across the exhibition site when the fatal accident occurred.

Tejas is designed as a multi-role platform capable of air combat and offensive air support missions, with secondary roles in reconnaissance and anti-ship operations. It is slated to become a mainstay of the IAF fleet.

The LCA project, long in gestation, formally took off in 1984 and the jet was declared air-worthy in 2011. IAF test crew have been involved from the conceptual stage through prototype trials, and the first version entered service in 2016. The aircraft faced scrutiny earlier when a technical snag forced an aborted sortie in October 2020.

Details about the deceased pilot and the Court of Inquiry ordered into the crash are awaited. *—PTI*

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PREVIOUS TEJAS CRASH

On 12 March, 2024, a Tejas aircraft of the IAF had crashed near Jaisalmer while returning from tri-services military exercise in Pokhran desert. The crash was the first for the Tejas since its introduction. Probe stated that an oil pump failure led to engine seizure.

PARTIAL RELIEF TO REVANNA AS HC QUASHES CHARGE

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

Karnataka High Court quashed the charge of outraging a woman's modesty (Section 354 IPC) against JD(S) leader and Hole Narasipura MLA HD Revanna, while allowing the sexual harassment charge under Section 354A to proceed. The complaint was filed by Revanna's former domestic worker.

Justice MI Arun held that the allegations corresponded to sexual harassment under Section 354A rather than the more serious offence under Section 354. Revanna, the son of former PM HD Deve Gowda, brother of Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy, and father of jailed Prajwal Revanna, had sought quashing of the FIR on grounds that the complaint was lodged beyond the three-year limitation period for offences carrying a maximum three-year sentence.

The court noted discrepancies between the complainant's version and the police report, especially regarding allegations against Prajwal. *—PTI*

Don't talk about leadership: Congress gags K'taka MLAs

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

Amid speculation over leadership change in Karnataka, the Congress said it has sternly warned its leaders and MLAs in the State from making any public statements about the leadership issue.

Blaming BJP for running a maligning campaign against its Karnataka government, AICC General Secretary in-Charge of Karnataka Randeep Surjewala said he had a discussion with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar over the issue.

Surjewala's comments come after at least 15 MLAs and about a dozen MLCs went to New Delhi to push the party leadership to make Shivakumar the Chief Minister, sources said. They reportedly cited a power sharing agreement.

"Had a discussion with Karnataka CM and Deputy CM and they agreed that a decisively defeated and faction ridden Karnataka BJP, along with a section of the media, are designedly running a maligning campaign against Karnataka and its Congress Government," he said.

DyCM DK Shivakumar said he does not believe in factionalism in the party and wished CM Siddaramaiah well for the rest of his term *PHOTO: PTI*

Shivakumar said he does not believe in groupism within the party and all 140 MLAs of the Congress are his own and he stands by them.

"I wish Siddaramaiah all the best," he said.

Siddaramaiah, meanwhile, asserted that he will continue as the Chief Minister and present the next Budget. He said that Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge would visit Bengaluru on Saturday.

"Once he comes, I will meet him," he said. *—Agencies*

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MODI ARRIVES IN JOHANNESBURG FOR G20 SUMMIT

JOHANNESBURG, 20 NOV

Prime Minister Narendra Modi landed in Johannesburg on Friday for the G20 Summit, set against a backdrop of geopolitical tension and shifting global power centres. The absence of US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping underlines the divisions framing this year's meeting. India–US ties have also faced strain after Washington imposed tariffs, weeks after Modi skipped the October ASEAN summit that Trump attended. Modi is on a three-day visit to South Africa, marking the first G20 Summit to be held on the African continent.

The G20 Presidency has adopted the theme "Solidarity, Equality and Sustainability". Modi is scheduled to speak in all three sessions. *—PTI*

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Nitish hands over home portfolio to BJP's Samrat

PATNA, 21 NOV

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister and BJP leader Samrat Choudhary has been allocated the crucial Home portfolio, a department Chief Minister Nitish Kumar had retained throughout nearly two decades in power, according to an official notification issued on Friday.

In a significant shift, the Finance portfolio, traditionally held by the BJP whenever it partnered with the JD(U), has gone to Nitish Kumar's party this time. Senior JD(U) leader Bijendra Prasad Yadav will head Finance and Commercial Taxes.

Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha has been assigned Revenue & Land Reforms and Mines & Geology. Nitish Kumar has kept General Administration, Cabinet Secretariat and Vigilance.

The allotments follow Nitish's swearing-in on Thursday. Alongside the 74-year-old leader, 26 ministers took oath: 14 from BJP, eight from the JD(U), two from LJP and one each from HAM and RLM. *—PTI*

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BOTH FROM UP

2 held in Udupi for leaking ship data to Pak

UDUPI, 21 NOV

Two men, both hailing from Uttar Pradesh, were arrested on Friday for allegedly sending highly confidential information about ship construction and vessel details to contacts in Pakistan via WhatsApp, police said.

The arrested individuals are Rohit, 29, and Santri, 37, both residents of Sultanpur in Uttar Pradesh. They were nabbed by the Udupi district police, they said.

Police sources said that Rohit was employed as an insulator at the Cochin Shipyard facility in Malpe, while Santri worked at the Cochin Shipyard in Kochi in Kerala.

"The duo was found sharing sensitive data, including shipbuilding details, vessel numbers, and other classified lists, directly to Pakistani phone numbers through WhatsApp," a senior police officer said, adding that the operation was conducted under the leadership of Karkala Assistant Superintendent of Police Harsh Priyavada.

According to officials, initial investigation confirmed the transmission of the leaked information, raising alarms over potential threats to India's maritime infrastructure and security. *—PTI*

Case filed over 'vote theft' in Mahadevapura

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

- The FIR, filed at the Electronic City Police Station, is based on a complaint by VT Raju.

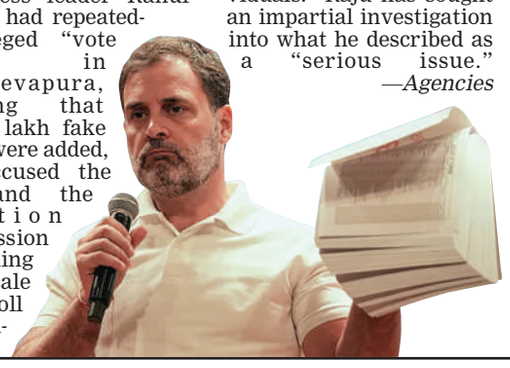
An FIR has been filed in Electronics City following a complaint about fake voters being added to the Mahadevapura voters' list before the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The complainant, VT Raju, alleged a mega conspiracy involving officials and politicians.

The Bengaluru police registered an FIR regarding the 'vote chori' case linked to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, after receiving a complaint about large-scale manipulation of the electoral rolls in the Mahadevapura Assembly constituency.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had repeatedly alleged "vote chori" in Mahadevapura, claiming that over a lakh fake voters were added, and accused the BJP and the Election Commission of enabling large-scale voter roll manipulation during the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

The FIR, filed at the Electronic City Police Station, is based on a complaint by VT Raju, a resident of Whitefield.

He alleged that 'fake' voters were illegally added to the official list ahead of the polls, reportedly involving political party members, government officials and private individuals. Raju has sought an impartial investigation into what he described as a "serious issue." *—Agencies*



UNSAFE AT HOMES

30% of Indian women face violence by partners: WHO

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Almost 30 per cent of women in India have experienced partner violence in their lifetime, with more than one in five women aged 15–49 reporting such abuse in 2023, according to a latest global report by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Globally, nearly one in three women, about 840 million, have suffered partner or sexual violence in their lives, a figure that has shown little change since 2000. Estimates show that 8.4 per cent of women aged 15–49 worldwide have faced sexual violence by a non-partner, while in India the figure is around 4 per cent.

"Violence against women is a long-standing global injustice, yet still among the least addressed," said WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. "No society can claim to be fair or healthy when half its population lives in fear. Ending this violence is not merely policy; it is about dignity, equality and human rights."

The report, released ahead of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on 25 November, warns that progress remains slow and the 2030 target under the Sustainable Development Goals is "elusive". Covering 168 countries, it draws on prevalence data from surveys and studies conducted between 2000 and 2023, updating the 2018 estimates issued in 2021.

WHO also flagged a drop in global funding for violence-prevention initiatives. In 2022, only 0.2 per cent of development aid supported such programmes, with allocations falling further in 2025. The authors urged governments to scale up prevention efforts, strengthen survivor-centred services and invest in data systems to protect at-risk groups. *—PTI*

Rupee hits record low, breaches 89-mark against USD

MUMBAI, 21 NOV

The rupee fell to a record low of 89.43 against the US dollar on Friday, pressured by strong global dollar demand and continued foreign investor selling. The dollar index was marginally higher at 100.09. Brent crude slipped 1.29 per cent to USD 62.56 per barrel, offering some relief on India's inflation and import bill. The rupee had closed at 88.68 on Thursday.

Experts said the currency's weakness is being driven by worsening trade fundamentals. Prajyot Chopda of Rajwade Treasury Consultants noted that India's goods deficit surged to a record USD 41.7 billion in October, up nearly 60 per cent year-on-year.

Exports fell 11.8 per cent to USD 34.4 billion, while gold imports tripled to USD 14.7 billion, pushing overall imports up 16.6 per cent to USD 76.1 billion. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Hyd overtakes City in getting GCC; BYV slams Cong

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

State BJP President BY Vijayendra tore into the Congress after a report said that Hyderabad had become the country's top Global Capability Centres (GCCs). "Bengaluru was once known as a leader in attracting GCCs," he wrote on X. "Cometh Congress, now Bengaluru carries the ignominy of leading in Global Corruption Centres." In a swipe at IT Minister Priyank Kharge's feuds with his Telangana counterpart Nara Lokesh and Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma, Vijayendra said, "Ministers have the arrogance to mock corporates for choosing other states and even resort to racial jibes against citizens from the North-Eastern states." He also alleged a scam in the State renting mechanical sweepers for Rs 600 crore. *—Agencies*

RCB stampede: HC bins DNA's plea against report

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

The Karnataka High Court dismissed the petition filed by DNA Entertainment Networks seeking to quash the report submitted to the government by the Retd Justice John Michael D'Cunha Inquiry Commission that investigate the Chinnaswamy stampede where 11 people were killed during RCB's victory celebrations. The two-judge divisional bench of Justices DK Singh and Tara Vithasta Ganju had earlier heard the petition filed by Sunil Matthew, Director of DNA Entertainment, regarding the stampede outside the stadium on 4 June. The bench, which had reserved its verdict for Friday, took the State government's stance into consideration before assuring DNA that it need not have any apprehension and then dismissed the petition. *—Agencies*

Citizens get 50% off on pending traffic fines

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

Bengaluru Traffic Police has announced a 50 per cent discount on pending traffic e-challans, which will be available from 21 November to 12 December. The announcement was posted by Bangalore police on X, announcing that the Karnataka State Government has officially issued a Government Order (GO) to settle pending traffic fines at half the amount. Motorists can view all pending fines and settle them through the 'Karnataka state police' and 'BTP ASTram' app or through the BangaloreOne website. Payments can be made by entering the vehicle registration number and the name of their nearest police station. For offline settlements, penalties can be settled at the Traffic Management Centre, on Infantry Road. *—PTI*

11 Nepal national held for fighting in City

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

Eleven Nepali nationals were arrested while two minors were detained in connection with a clash that broke out between two rival groups in front of Vidhana Soudha here, police said on Friday. A video of the incident that occurred on 16 November went viral on social media, prompting police action. According to police, the incident involved two groups of Nepali nationals who frequently visit popular landmarks in Bengaluru to create reels in their native language, which gain traction in Nepal. The confrontation allegedly began when one group spotted the other filming reels near Vidhan Soudha, escalating into a fight. When both groups started attacking each other, police intervened and used mild force to bring the situation under control. *—PTI*

DKS, CM say will abide by High Command

DKS: AHINDA meet was to choose next KPCC Prez, 5 DyCMS

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah asserted that he will complete a full five-year term in his position, while his Deputy and KPCC President DK Shivakumar said "all the best".

Tensions were high as the Congress party completed its half way mark in the State – with 15 MLAs and about a dozen MLCs going to New Delhi to urge the party leadership to make Shivakumar the Chief Minister, based on the alleged power sharing agreement.

Siddaramaiah asserted that the High Command has to decide on the leadership change, cabinet reshuffle or government restructuring.

Meanwhile, Shivakumar said that he does not believe in factionalism, saying it was "not in his blood". All 140 MLAs in the State were his, not just his loyalists he said.

Regarding some MLAs camping in Delhi, Shivakumar said, "The CM decided to reshuffle the Cabinet. Everyone wants to become a minister, so it is quite natural for them. It is their right."

Why are you asking this (CM change)? Yes, I will continue. I will present the budgets in future also... Finally, Shivakumar and I have to listen to whatever the High Command says

Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

Look, the CM has spoken his mind... He has said that it's between him and the High Command... We will stick to whatever the party High Command says

DK Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister

Meanwhile, AHINDA (minorities, backward castes and Dalits) MLAs met Shivakumar on Shivakumar, a prominent Vokkaliga leader.

Concurrently, Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi on Thursday hosted a dinner for Ministers and MLAs.

Though Jarkiholi and Home Minister G Parameshwara said it was just a regular meeting, Shivakumar said that their meeting was to discuss a new Congress President and to have four to five Deputy Chief Ministers. "The meetings have been going on. Let them conduct more meetings," he said. *—PTI*

DKS visits Central Prison to talk to Congress MLAs

Shivakumar made a surprise visit to the Bengaluru Central Jail and to meet jailed Congress MLAs Vinay Kulkarni and KC Veerendra alias Puppy. Shivakumar spoke to them for some time. Kulkarni is in jail in connection with a murder case while Puppy is behind the bars in a money laundering case. It was not known what Shivakumar discussed with the MLAs. "He was supposed to meet them two weeks ago, but he is meeting now. It's just a courtesy call and nothing else," a source in the Congress said.

Congmen nearly come to blows

SIDLAGATTA, 21 NOV

Tension erupted at the Congress office on Thursday evening when rival party groups nearly clashed in the presence of AICC Secretary Abhishek Dutt. The meeting was meant to discuss "vote chori" and collect signatures protesting alleged vote theft by the BJP.

Before it began, supporters of rebel leader Puttu Anjanappa and former candidate Rajiv Gowda exchanged slogans, leading to heated arguments. Gowda's supporters objected to backing Anjanappa, accusing him of damaging the party in the last polls. The chaos escalated, with some attempting to use chairs as weapons. Police struggled to control the situation until senior leaders intervened. No complaint was filed. *—Salar News*

Supporters of rebel leader Puttu Anjanappa and former candidate Rajiv Gowda lose their cool during a 'vote chori' event **PHOTO: SALAR**

BLESSED

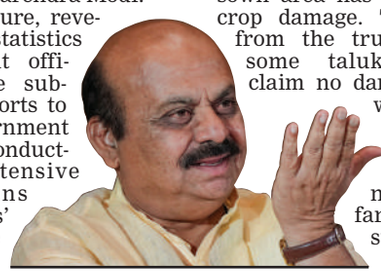
Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy felicitated by Adichunchanagiri Mutt seer Nirmalanandanatha Swami during the 17th Founder's Day and BGS Utsav, in Bengaluru, on Friday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

'Crop loss compensation survey a lie'

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

Former chief minister and BJP leader Basavaraj Bommai has flagged major lapses in the State government's crop compensation survey, noting that the survey had claimed that there was no damage to some taluks, "which was far from the truth". The survey was undertaken after rain-induced floods wreaked havoc in several districts.

Sharing a letter he wrote to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Bommai wrote on X:"Just recently, we all noticed that you submitted a request to Prime Minister Narendra Modi."



"Agriculture, revenue, and statistics department officials have submitted reports to the government without conducting extensive inspections of farmers' lands," the BJP leader alleged. "As a result, reports have come in several taluks stating that only about 10 per cent of the total sown area has experienced crop damage. This is far from the truth, and in some taluks, reports claim no damage at all, which is far from the truth."

Bommai noted that farmers have suffered loss over the past two years with crops maize, soybean, groundnut, and onion being destroyed due to the rains. He said that no compensation was given last year despite this.

"For example, in Mundargi taluk of Gadag district, there has been significant crop damage, yet the report states that there has been no damage. This needs to be rectified immediately across the State, and crop compensation must be provided to all affected farmers," he added. *—Salar News*

Curb maize imports for fair price: CM to Centre

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said the State government would urge the Centre to immediately curb maize imports to stabilise prices, as he chaired a meeting on the millet farmer's protests in North Karnataka.

"Maize production has increased in both Karnataka and the rest of the country," he said in a statement. "Despite this, the Union Government has imported 70 lakh metric tonnes of maize, placing a heavy burden on farmers nationwide."

"The quota allotted to Karnataka for producing ethanol from maize is extremely low, resulting in reduced procurement by distilleries," he added.

He said that Union Food Ministry had issued guidelines for NAFED/NCCF to procure maize for ethanol production, but the agencies had not done so.

"Distilleries had stockpiled maize earlier when prices were low, and are now unwilling to buy. This is a clear violation of norms — distilleries must resume procurement as required," he said.

He said the State government would demand that the NAFED/NCCF begin procurement to stabilise the prices.

"We will write to the Centre urging restrictions on the 70 lakh MT maize import," Siddaramaiah said, adding that the government would convene a meeting with distilleries and the poultry industry. *—Salar News*

7 cows die as bacterial infection that killed blackbucks spreads

HIREKOP RAJAN SAMUEL
BELAGAVI, 21 NOV

Haemorrhagic Septicaemia (HS), the bacterial infection that recently killed 31 blackbucks at the Kittur Rani Chennamma Mini Zoo in Bhutaramanahatti, has now spread to domestic livestock in adjoining areas, killing at least seven cattle in Kakati and Yamakkanamaradi villages.

Lumps had developed on the bodies of the infected animals, and samples have been sent to laboratories for confirmation, the Animal Husbandry Department in Belagavi said. Assistant Director (AD) Anand Patil said the exact cause of death would be verified once test results arrive.

"We have taken rapid measures to prevent further spread of the infection to other livestock," he said.

However, farmers allege that despite raising concerns, officials failed to respond promptly. Narayan Patil from Kakati, where four cattle died, claimed that even after they reported the appearance of lumps on their animals, no staff visited the village.

"We informed the department as soon as symptoms appeared, but no action was taken," he alleged. Patil denied the accusations, asserting that rapid-response veterinary teams had attended to the affected livestock.

The National Institute of Veterinary Epidemiology and Disease Informatics has already issued an alert warning of a possible HS outbreak in Belagavi. Forest Department authorities have also written to the Husbandry Department, but villagers say no preventive measures were implemented in time.

Belagavi Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) Nagaraj Balhasuri stated that the zoo premises and surrounding areas have been disinfected. Meanwhile, the remaining seven blackbucks at the mini zoo are reported to be recovering. *—Salar News*

Chittapur BJP leader Manikantha held

KALABURAGI, 21 NOV

Chittapur BJP leader Manikantha Rathod was arrested near Shiraval in Afzalpur taluk on Thursday in an assault case and remanded to judicial custody.

Police said Rathod allegedly led a group that assaulted Rasheed Dastagir Inamdar Mutya of Narayanpur village, his driver Zubair and another man, Bhagesh, during a confrontation near the Hazrat Imam Khasim Dargah. Rathod had accused Rasheed Mutya of cheating devotees and collecting money and jewellery in the name of the dargah. A scuffle broke out during the protest, leaving the three men injured and shifted to Kalaburagi District Hospital.

Rathod has faced previous controversies. In October, he was booked for allegedly threatening Minister Priyank Kharge during a press conference, where he warned that RSS volunteers could "barge into Kharge's house." Police registered a case under multiple sections of the BNS after videos of his remarks circulated online.

He was also earlier booked for allegedly making inflammatory statements targeting the Muslim community in a viral video, in which he called for retaliatory violence.

Rathod has multiple past criminal cases, including rice smuggling under the PDS scheme, and had previously been barred from Kalaburagi district. *—Salar News*

Police have leads in ATM heist: HM

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

State Home Minister G Parameshwara on Friday said police have secured crucial leads in the Rs 7-crore heist in Bengaluru and expressed confidence that arrests are imminent. "We have got some important leads in the robbery case. I cannot disclose them now because it will alert the offenders. We will catch them very soon," he told reporters.

Responding to Opposition criticism over the delay in tracing the accused, Parameshwara said, "We are a responsible government." He said would also detail crimes reported during the previous BJP administration.

The robbery occurred on Wednesday when unidentified men, posing as RBI officials, stopped an ATM cash van transporting money from a bank branch in JP Nagar. *—PTI*

8 WIN INFOSYS SOCIAL INNOVATION AWARD

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

Infosys Foundation, the company's non-profit wing, announced the winners of their Aarohan Social Innovation Awards. Over 2,000 applicants applied from across the country, eight innovations that aim to improve lives, were awarded.

Three main winners were announced across three established categories, each winning INR 50 lakh. The education category went to Connecting the Dots an interactive learning programme.

The Healthcare category was awarded to CLUIX C012, an AI-enabled water-quality analyser. The Environmental Sustainability category recognised 'Borecharger', a robotic borewell-recharge technique that can improve drinking water quality. Infosyis also recognised five standout innovations, spanning across industries and awarded them INR 10 lakh each. *—PTI*

Family of 4 in Dharwad die by suicide due to debt

DHARWAD, 21 NOV

Four members of a family committed suicide on Friday morning by jumping into a well, allegedly due to mounting debts, police said. The incident occurred in the Chikkamalligawad village in the Dharwad taluk of this district, the police said.

The deceased have been identified as Vittal Shinde, 80, son Narayan Shinde, 42 and grandchildren Shivakumar Shinde, 12 and Shrinidhi Shinde, 11. According to the police, the members of the family jumped into a well near the Yellamma temple early on Friday morning. The incident came to light when cattle grazers spotted the bodies.

Citing preliminary information, a senior police officer said that Narayan jumped into the well along with his father and two children. One of the children was reportedly found wearing her school uniform.

Police have recovered the bodies and shifted them to the Dharwad District Hospital for postmortem. *—PTI*

Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support.

BEST ACCESSIBILITY

KIA is India's first to achieve ACI Level 3

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru (KIA) announced that it has become the first airport in India to be awarded Level 3 in the Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation programme by Airports Council International, marking another milestone for the airport. KIA is operated by Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL).

This recognition reflects BIAL's steadfast commitment to inclusion, accessibility, and delivering an equitable travel experience for every passenger, it said.

"Accessibility and inclusion are integral to BIAL's long-term vision of creating a barrier free, dignified, and empathetic travel experience for all. Guided by its Customer First philosophy, BLR Airport has steadily advanced from Level 1 (December 2024) to Level 3 (November 2025), within less than a year, demonstrating leadership and accountability in driving inclusive transformation," BIAL said in a statement.

Key achievements under this level 3 include: enhanced digital accessibility, collaborative partnerships, training and awareness expansion and universal design integration, it said.

Hari Marar, BIAL's Managing Director and CEO, stated, "At BLR Airport, accessibility is adopted as a mindset that defines how we design, operate, and engage. We are pleased to be the first airport in India to achieve ACI's Level 3 Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation, a reflection of our commitment. *—PTI*

Cong won't ally with MNS in civic body polls

MUMBAI, 21 NOV

The Congress on Friday reiterated that it will not ally with the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) for the upcoming civic polls, stressing it will never partner with parties that "break the law or intimidate". The remark was aimed at Raj Thackeray's MNS, known for its sons-of-the-soil politics.

MNS leader Sandeep Deshpande said the party is independent and not part of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), which includes Shiv Sena (UBT), Congress and NCP (SP). Congress has already announced it will contest the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) elections alone.

Mumbai Congress Chief Varsha Gaikwad criticised the BJP and the Shinde-led Sena for ignoring real issues while attempting to polarise voters. *—PTI*

Ex-MLA, 4 others' homes raided in Kerala loan fraud

MALAPPURAM, 21 NOV

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) conducted raids on former MLA PV Anvar and four others in connection with the Kerala Financial Corporation (KFC) loan misappropriation case.

According to ED sources, the case was initiated by the Kerala Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau, following irregularities in sanctioning of loans.

Investigators revealed that a Rs 7.5 crore loan was granted to Anvar's driver without proper collateral assessment. Subsequent loans were then issued on the same collateral, leading to a total KFC loss of Rs 22.30 crore. The raids commenced at Anvar's residences, including his amusement park, while simultaneous searches were also conducted at the homes of the driver and KFC officials. *—PTI*

Ex TDB chief altered records: SIT on Sabarimala row

THIRU'THAPURAM, 21 NOV

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) investigating the gold theft at Sabarimala temple has accused A Padmakumar, former president of the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB), of altering records to facilitate illicit activities. According to the remand report submitted to the Kollam Vigilance Court following his arrest, Padmakumar replaced "gold-plated copper plates" with "copper plates" in official documents, thereby allowing the removal of valuable gold-cladded door frames from the Sreekovil.

The report alleges that Padmakumar, in conspiracy with others, acted contrary to the regulations of the Devaswom Manual, which forbids the movement of valuables from the temple. After a board meeting, he is said to have helped accused Unnikrishnan Potty to access the gold plates. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Delhi CM lays foundation of Atal Canteen

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta laid the foundation stone for the first "Atal" canteen in Timarpur, part of a BJP election promise to provide affordable meals for the needy. A total of 100 canteens will open on 25 December, the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, serving two meals daily for just Rs 5 per person. "Our resolve is that no person should go to bed hungry," Gupta stated.

Urban Development Minister Ashish Sood highlighted the initiative's dedication to 'Antyodaya', emphasising upliftment of vulnerable sections. The meals will adhere to rigorous safety and hygiene standards, with quality inspected by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India. *—PTI*

SC seeks EC's reply on pleas against SIR

Kerala govt says undertaking of SIR not conducive to country's democratic polity

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to hear a batch of pleas challenging the Election Commission's (EC) decision to conduct the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise in Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and other states.

The court issued notice to the EC on all the fresh petitions filed by different political leaders, challenging SIR exercises on different grounds.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the Kerala government said that there is some urgency involved in the matter.

The court said that it is good that political parties are now coming forward to challenge the exercise instead of private individuals.

The top court is already hearing a batch of pleas challenging the validity of the EC's decision to conduct pan-India SIR exercise.

SIR
WHY BLO'S ARE NOT HAVING STAMPS IN THE FORM?
SIR
THE TENURE FOR FORM SUBMISSION HAS TO BE INCREASED
SOME BLO'S ACTIVITIES ARE SUSPICIOUS DISTRIBUTING FORMS UNDER THE TREE WHO ARE THEY?
-S.K.D.CONG.
SOME BLOs HAVE BEEN WORKING FOR TMC. WHAT ACTION BE TAKEN AGAINST THEM
S.K.D.CONG

Congress activists protest over Special Intensive Revision exercise in Kolkata in West Bengal on Friday *PHOTO: PTI*

The Kerala government's plea said that the state is of the view that the SIR, particularly in the manner in which it is being undertaken, is not conducive to the democratic polity of the country.

The state government further said that the deferment is sought for since undertaking of the SIR simultaneously with the elections to the local self government institutions (LSGI) will adversely affect the smooth conduct of the elections and will possibly result in an administrative impasse in the state.

The Kerala government further said there are 1200 LSGIs in the State, made up of 941 Grama Panchayats, 152 Block Panchayats, 14 District Panchayats, 87 municipalities and six corporations.

The Kerala State Election Commission has decided to conduct general elections to the LSGIs in the state on 9 and 11 December.

Similarly, petitioner PK Kunhalikutty, general secretary of Indian Union Muslim League, sought direction to the Centre to set-aside the SIR exercise in Kerala.

Kunhalikutty plea said the exercise has been introduced by the poll panel despite the completion of a comprehensive Special Summary Revision. *—PTI*

Gujarat BLO kills self; Kin alleges SIR stress

A schoolteacher deployed as a booth level officer (BLO) allegedly died by suicide in Gujarat's Gir Somnath district on Friday, with his family claiming he left a note blaming "mental stress and exhaustion" caused by the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. Arvind Vadher, a primary school teacher from Chhara village in Kodinar, was found hanging at his home in Devli village. In a note he said he could not cope with the SIR workload and asked her to take care of their son. *—PTI*

7 Kolkata BLOs gets show-cause notices from EC

Seven Booth Level Officers of Kolkata's Beliaghata constituency have been served notices by the Election Commission for lapses in digitising SIR enumeration forms, an official said. The complaint concerns faulty data entry of collected forms. The officers have been asked to explain by Friday afternoon why they failed to meet assigned duties. Disciplinary action may follow if their responses are found inadequate.

Phase two of the SIR revision is under way across 12 states. *—PTI*

World must hike climate funds: India at COP30

BALEM, 21 NOV

India is committed to domestic adaptation as part of climate action but there is an urgent need for a scaled-up adaptation finance as the global gap widens, **Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav** said here.

Yadav also said that COP30, must deliver a clear political message that "adaptation is not an optional add-on but an essential investment."

Yadav expressed concern that the Glasgow Climate Pact goal of doubling public adaptation finance from 2019 levels to around USD 40 billion by 2025 is likely to be missed if the current trend continues.

He highlighted India's efforts and experiences in accessing adaptation finance, the barriers faced by developing countries and the global steps needed to raise adaptation ambition.

Marking the 10th anniversary of the Paris Agreement, he underscored the importance of Article 7.6, which emphasises support for developing countries in taking effective adaptation action.

Negotiators from more than 190 countries who have gathered here for the annual Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) -- the COP30 summit – are finalising a draft proposal by host Brazil as the conference draws towards its end.

"India's adaptation-relevant expenditure increased by over 150 per cent over seven years from 2016-17 to 2022-23. Internationally, India has strengthened its ability to access climate finance. *—PTI*

Nitish cabinet: JD(U), BJP get key portfolios

>>>Continued on Page 1

While senior JD(U) leader Shrowan Kumar has been given portfolios of Rural Development and Transport departments, his party colleague Ashok Chowdhary got the Rural Works department portfolio.

JD(U) leader Vijay Chowdhary has been given the portfolios of Building Construction, Water Resources and Parliamentary Affairs, while Madan Sahni of the same party got the Social Welfare department portfolio, the notification said.

The BJP's Shreyasi Singh has been given portfolios of Sports and Information and Technology, while her party's Arun Shankar Prasad got the Tourism department. Sanjay Kumar Singh Tiger, also of the BJP, has been given the Labour Resources department, it said.

Deepak Prakash of the Rashtriya Lok Samta Party and HAM(S)'s Santosh Suman have been given the portfolios of Panchayati Raj department and Minor Water Resources department, respectively.

LJP (RV) MLAs Sanjay Kumar and Sanjay Kumar Singh became Sugarcane and Public Health Engineering Department ministers.

Other members of the Cabinet included Mangal Pandey (Health and Law), Dilip Jaiswal (Industries), Leshi Singh (Food Consumer and Protection), Nitin Nabin (Road Construction and Urban Development and Housing), Ram Kripal Yadav (Agriculture), Sunil Kumar (Education, and Science, Technology and Technical Education department).

Mohd Zama Khan (Minority Affairs), Surendra Mehta (Animal and Fishery Resources), Narayan Prasad (Disaster Management), Rama Nishad (Backward Class and Extremely Backward Classes welfare), Lakhendra Kumar Roshan (SC and ST Welfare) and Pramod Kumar (Cooperative) are also the remaining members of the Cabinet, the notification said. *—PTI*

"The LJP (RV) has been given two berths in the new cabinet in Bihar... It's enough. How much more greedy can I be?"

-Chirag Paswan, Union Minister

"The new cabinet of Nitish Kumar is full of corrupts and criminals. This council of ministers is a slap on the face of the people of Bihar

-Prashant Kishore, Jan Suraaj Party Leader

Udhayanidhi calls Sanskrit 'dead language'

CHENNAI, 21 NOV

Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin on Friday described Sanskrit as "a dead language", prompting a sharp rebuttal from the BJP. Speaking at a book launch, the DMK leader criticised the Union government for allocating only Rs 150 crore for the development of Tamil, while Sanskrit which he referred to as "a dead language" was receiving Rs 2,400 crore.

His remarks drew strong criticism from BJP leader Tamilisai Soundararajan, who told PTI Videos that no one had the right to label any language as dead, particularly one still used widely in prayers, rituals and traditional learning across the country. She said such comments displayed an unnecessary tendency to elevate one language by demeaning another.

Soundararajan said that Tamil has absorbed numerous words and ideas from Sanskrit over centuries. This reflected Tamil's openness and cultural strength rather than any weakness. She urged political leaders to speak responsibly on language. *—PTI*

DON JR & DANDIYA

Donald Trump Jr spent Thursday in Jamnagar learning dandiya from Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant during an Ambani-hosted event, as he continued his Gujarat tour. He also visited temples, cultural sites and Vantara, the Ambani-led wildlife rescue facility. Videos showed him offering prayers to Lord Ganesha inside a complex, standing barefoot alongside Radhika *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

No rest until fixing timeline for Guv to clear bills: Stalin

CHENNAI, 21 NOV

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK President MK Stalin on Friday vowed that there would be "no rest" until the Constitution is amended to fix strict timelines for governors to clear Bills.

In his first response to the Supreme Court's advisory opinion on the Presidential Reference, Stalin said the opinion would not affect the Court's 8 April 2025 judgment in State of Tamil Nadu vs Governor of Tamil Nadu.

He stressed that the Bench had reaffirmed essential constitutional principles: the elected government must remain the primary executive authority; there cannot be two competing power centers in a State; and governors must operate strictly within constitutional limits. The Court also made clear that governors have no power to kill Bills, cannot exercise a pocket veto, and cannot withhold a Bill without reason.

The SC reiterated that governors cannot indefinitely delay bills. In cases of prolonged inaction, States can go to Constitutional Courts, which may hold the governors accountable. Stalin cited the Ahmedabad St. Xavier's College ruling stating that advisory opinions do not have the force of binding judgments. The Court rejected the Tamil Nadu Governor's theory of pocket veto, he said. *—PTI*

India, Afghan to get trade attaches

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

India and Afghanistan have decided to appoint dedicated commercial attachés in each other's capitals to revitalise bilateral trade currently valued at over USD 1 billion.

The decision has been taken during a bilateral meeting between Afghanistan's Minister of Industry and Commerce Hajji Nooruddin Azizi and Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Jitin Prasad here on 20 November.

M Anand Prakash, joint secretary (PAI division) said that the air freight corridor on the Kabul-Delhi sector and Kabul Amritsar routes have been activated, which would improve connectivity and strengthen bilateral trade.

The announcement holds significance as it comes days after Afghan Deputy Prime Minister Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar directed traders to phase out business with Pakistan within three months over repeated border closures and "political misuse" of trade routes.

India and Afghanistan have also decided to reactivate the joint working groups on trade, commerce and investment.

The move is aimed at pushing bilateral trade beyond the pre-2021 level of over USD 1.8 billion by fully operationalising the Chabahar Port route, simplifying customs and banking procedures.

Azizi sought faster issuance of business visas, launch of regular shipping lines from Chabahar Port, development of dry ports in Nimruz province and easier import-export processes for Afghan goods at Nhava Sheva Port.

The two sides also agreed to encourage joint investments in several sectors

Azizi called for holding of exhibitions, B2B meetings and sector-specific conferences in both countries. *—PTI*

TO BOOST BUSINESS

7 states enact Jan Vishwas Act like laws

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

Seven NDA-ruled states are pushing for reforms on the lines of the Jan Vishwas Act, which de-criminalises minor offences by replacing prison terms with fines, to make investment climates more predictable and business-friendly.

This year, the seven states, including Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, passed their own legislations or promulgated ordinances on the lines of the Jan Vishwas Act, making it the largest coordinated deregulation push undertaken at the state level to date, they said.

"Together, these reforms represent a structural shift toward trust-based governance, cutting down on criminalisation for routine, technical, or procedural non-compliances," officials said.

The combined effect is expected to boost entrepreneurship, reduce litigation, provide regulatory clarity and make state-level investment climates more predictable and business-friendly.

Maharashtra has approved the Jan Vishwas Ordinance, 2025, amending seven rules across five departments, including labour, revenue and public health, to modernise penalty frameworks.

In Madhya Pradesh, efforts are ongoing to amend 144 sections across 24 Acts, removing criminal penalties and rationalising compliance requirements.

The Chhattisgarh Assembly passed its Jan Vishwas Bill in July, decriminalising 163 provisions across eight Acts for streamlined monetary penalties.

The Gujarat Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill amended 516 provisions across 11 laws spanning six departments, in one of the most extensive clean-ups this year.

The Haryana Jan Vishwas Ordinance has decriminalised 164 provisions across 42 Acts administered by 17 departments, making it the broadest cross-departmental exercise among the states.

- This year, the seven states, including Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, passed their own legislations on the lines of the Jan Vishwas Act, making it the largest deregulation push in the state level to date.

Odisha promulgated the Odisha Jan Vishwas Ordinance, covering 15 key proposals under 10 departments, aimed at reducing unnecessary penal action and improving ease of service delivery.

The Tripura Jan Vishwas Act 2025 amends 16 sections across 10 laws, including five complete repeals of outdated provisions. *—PTI*

People protesting against the Sangai Festival in Manipur's East imphal district on Friday *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

Protest over Manipur tourism fest turns violent

IMPHAL, 21 NOV

People demonstrating against the Sangai festival clashed with security forces in Manipur's Imphal East district on Friday, amid a 'cease work' called by the Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI).

The Meitei group has been opposing the tourism festival by the state government, stating that organising such an event amid the crisis being faced by families displaced by the ethnic violence was "highly insensitive".

The clash happened at Khurai Lamlong when security forces intercepted demonstrators, including several displaced persons, who were marching towards the venue of the festival.

The demonstrators hurled stones at the forces, forcing them to lob tear gas shells.The 'cease work' affected normal life in the districts.

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat called for social unity while meeting with tribal leaders in Imphal, reiterating that the organisation is "dedicated to strengthening society." *—PTI*

Delhi: Over 800 cybercrime suspects held in 48 hr sweep

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

In a significant crackdown, the Delhi Police have arrested or bound down over 800 accused linked to various cybercrime modules in a 48-hour operation named 'CyHawk', an official said on Friday. The police have arrested or bound down 877 people, while 509 individuals have been sent notices in connection with cybercrimes in the 48-hour operation till 9am on Friday, joint commissioner of police (intelligence fusion and strategic Operations), Rajneesh Gupta said. Crimes such as job or investment or work-from-home fraud, have been busted during the operation, while many call centres involved in duping people have also been raided. Gupta said they are committed to ensure better protection against digital fraud and keep citizens safe online. *—PTI*

Protest erupts over minor girl's rape, murder in M'rashtra

NASHIK, 21 NOV

A massive protest was staged outside the court in Malegaon in Maharashtra's Nashik district on Friday over the alleged rape and murder of a four-year-old girl, with protesters demanding capital punishment for the arrested person. A shutdown was observed in Malegaon, and a march was taken out by thousands of people. State Food and Drug Administration Minister Narhari Zirwal said the accused will be given the harshest punishment for the crime. He accompanied by Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange visited the family members of the victim in Dongrale a village. The girl was raped and bludgeoned to death with a stone in village on 16 November. One person was arrested. *—PTI*

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

Proposed axing of trees for Kumbh Mela draws ire

MUMBAI, 21 NOV

The proposed felling of trees to develop a Sadhu Gram colony in Tapovan area of Nashik in Maharashtra, ahead of the 2027 Kumbh Mela, has united locals and environmental groups against the civic body's plan. Over 1,700 trees are proposed to be removed from the 54-acre land under the Nashik Municipal Corporation's jurisdiction. Environmental activists filed 400 objections and launched protests after 1,670 trees were marked with yellow paint, of which about 40 per cent are proposed to be cut. Maharashtra Minister Girish Mahajan assured protesters that efforts would be made to relocate trees and ten new trees would be planted for every tree cut, while underlining the necessity of the colony. *—PTI*

Man arrested for buying baby girl in Tamil Nadu's Erode

ERODE, 21 NOV

A man was arrested for allegedly purchasing an infant girl in Bhavani in Tamil Nadu's Erode district. Following a tip-off, the police reached the location and found Praveen Kumar, 31, in possession of the child less than 10 days old. During interrogation, the man confessed that the baby was sold to him by two women from Mumbai, identified as Shabana and Reshma. The police have launched a manhunt to trace them. The child has been handed over to the District Child Welfare Committee. The police have filed a case against the three under Section 8 and 81 of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act.*—PTI*

Delhi blast: Cops to check ammonium nitrate trade

CCTV audits and social media tracking are now mandatory

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

Delhi Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena has issued a series of "precautionary and preventive" directives to strengthen policing and regulatory oversight following the November 10 suicide car explosion near the Red Fort, which killed 15 people.

In written communications sent on 19 November, Saxena directed the commissioner of police to maintain a digital registry of all entities purchasing or selling ammonium nitrate beyond a prescribed limit, capturing photographs and key identification details of buyers and sellers.

He also ordered rigorous security audits of busy markets and ISBTs to assess CCTV coverage and deployment gaps.

Police have been instructed to hold consultations with major social media platforms, including Meta and X, to scientifically track radicalised content, while human and technical intelligence is to be strengthened in vulnerable areas. Community outreach is to be expanded to bolster preventive policing. The administration has additionally been asked to create a central data repository of medical professionals employed in private and government hospitals, including foreign degree records, for secondary verification by police.

Security personnel escort accused, involved in the car bomb blast near Red Fort, with faces covered, while bringing them to the Patiala House Court, in New Delhi *PHOTO: PTI*

In a parallel directive, the L-G asked the chief secretary to examine the feasibility of replicating drone policies of Telangana and Himachal Pradesh, noting heightened risks of misuse of unmanned systems. He emphasised dynamic access for Delhi Police to the Centre's Digital Sky platform.

Meanwhile, the Delhi High Court declined to pass an order on a plea by blast co-accused Jasir Bilal Wani, who sought permission to meet his lawyer at the NIA headquarters. Arrested on 17 November as an alleged "active co-conspirator" of suicide bomber Umar Un Nabi, Wani remains in 10-day NIA custody.

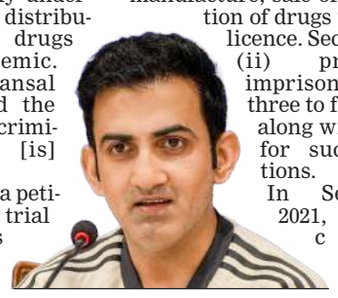
Separately, Srinagar Police conducted extensive inspections at hospitals, chemical and fertiliser shops, and car dealerships as part of coordinated security checks.

The drive followed revelations in the "white-collar terror" module—linked to the Red Fort case—about misuse of chemicals, second-hand vehicles, and concealed weapons. *—PTI*

Delhi HC quashes Covid drugs case against Gambhir

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

The Delhi High Court on Friday quashed a prosecution against Indian cricket team head coach Gautam Gambhir, his foundation and family members for allegedly undertaking unauthorised distribution of COVID-19 drugs during the pandemic. Justice Neena Bansal Krishna pronounced the order, stating the "criminal complaint [is] quashed".



The ruling came on a petition contesting the trial court's summons issued to Gambhir, his wife Natasha, mother Seema, and foundation CEO Aprajita Singh. The Delhi government's Drug Control Department had accused them of violating Section 18(c) of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, which bars the manufacture, sale or distribution of drugs without a licence. Section 27(b)(ii) prescribes imprisonment of three to five years, along with a fine, for such violations.

In September 2021, the high court stayed the trial court proceedings and sought the regulator's response to the foundation's plea challenging the complaint and summons. The stay was lifted on April 9, after which Gambhir filed a renewed plea seeking recall of the order.

During the hearing, state counsel argued the petition was not maintainable because the former MP had bypassed the sessions court's revisional jurisdiction. The prosecution maintained that the petitioners had admittedly distributed drugs without a valid licence and said their defence rested on the claim that the medicines were provided for free, not sold. *—PTI*

Andhra teacher dies as metal bucket crashed on her

RAJANAGARAM, 21 NOV

A government school teacher died in Andhra Pradesh's Anakapalli district on Friday after a construction bucket crashed on her, with police blaming contractor negligence.

SP Tuhin Sinha said Jyotshna, an English teacher at Rajanagaram government high school, was walking past an under-construction block when the bucket, used to lift materials, fell on her.

He said the contractor had neither perimeter fencing nor an exclusion zone.

A case has been registered and an investigation is under way. *—PTI*

Family kills girl for affair, attempts to cremate in J'khand

GARHWA, 21 NOV

A 15-year-old girl was allegedly murdered by her family in Jharkhand's Garhwa district after being caught with her boyfriend, police reported on Friday. Acting on a tip-off, authorities intercepted the girl's body as it was being secretly cremated by family members on Thursday evening.

"We had received information that the girl had been beaten to death after her family caught her with her boyfriend. A police team reached the cremation ground in the Garhwa town police station area when family members were preparing to cremate her body," stated Sub-Divisional Police Officer Neeraj Kumar.

Most family members fled upon seeing the police, but the victim's father and brother were apprehended. Kumar added, "The body has been sent for post-mortem examination at the Sadar Hospital. Preliminary investigations suggest this is a case of honour killing. A case has been registered, and interrogation of the father and brother is underway." *—PTI*

Demands met, Hindu body ends anti-mosque protest in Shimla

SHIMLA, 21 NOV

The Devbhoomi Sangharsh Samiti on Friday called off its protest seeking closure of the Sanjauli mosque, declared unauthorised by a court, saying the administration had "met" its key demands.

The mosque is located on the outskirts of Shimla. Hindu Raksha Manch president Kamal Gautam said officials had accepted demands including sealing the mosque, disconnecting its electricity and water supply and withdrawing the FIR against those who tried to stop Muslims from praying last Friday. Some measures will be implemented immediately, while others remain pending, he said.

- Sanjauli mosque, which was declared unauthorised by a court, is located on the outskirts of Shimla town

An eight-member Samiti committee will meet the Shimla additional district magistrate on 29 November for legal formalities, though the hunger strike will continue until the matter is fully resolved. The Samiti had earlier called for a large protest on Friday and urged parents to keep children home. The group has been on a hunger strike for four days over the dispute. *—PTI*

Police personnel deployed outside the Sanjauli mosque, which has been declared illegal by a court, in view of protests by Hindu organisations, in Shimla *PHOTO: PTI*

Anti-CAA stir aimed at regime change like B'desh, Nepal: Delhi cops

SHIMLA, 21 NOV

Delhi Police on Friday told the Supreme Court that the anti-CAA protests in Delhi were not a routine dharna but part of a wider conspiracy seeking "regime change" similar to Bangladesh and Nepal. Contesting the bail pleas of activists Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam and others booked under the UAPA in the 2020 riots case, Additional Solicitor General S V Raju said several accused, including Tahir Hussain, Shifa Ur Rahman, Meeran Haider, Ishrat Jahan and Khalid Saifi, mobilised crowds, organised chakka jams and financed violence.

Citing a witness, he claimed the plan included disrupting Assam and triggering large-scale clashes. Raju said rioters destroyed CCTVs before unleashing violence in which a police constable and an Intelligence Bureau officer were killed. He added that "intellectual" conspirators were more dangerous than ground workers and noted a growing trend of professionals engaging in "anti-national" activities. The bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and NV Anjaria will hear the matter on 24 November. *— PTI*

CSBE REPORT REVEALS

Jaipur suicide: Student begged teacher for help

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

A CBSE inquiry into the suicide of a Class 4 student at Jaipur's Neerja Modi School has found sustained bullying and repeated inaction by teachers and administrators.

The nine-year-old, who died after jumping from the fourth floor on 1 November, had allegedly faced persistent bullying for over 18 months, including classmates using "bad words," the board said in a show-cause notice to the school.

The enquiry panel noted that the child's parents first raised concerns in July 2024, but the school failed to ensure a safe environment. Despite repeated alerts, the anti-bullying committee never contacted the family. During a September 2025 PTM, the father reportedly witnessed a boy bullying the child; the class teacher allegedly advised that the girl "should adjust."

The parents of the nine-year-old victim, who committed suicide, speak with the media over a video call *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

CCTV footage from the day of the incident showed a confrontation involving a digital slate on which boys displayed content that embarrassed the girl. The footage also captured the child approaching her class teacher five times in her final 45 minutes, seeking help. The teacher admitted negligence, with the board stating her response contradicted the duty to act as a protective caregiver.

The committee flagged multiple safety lapses, including inadequate CCTV monitoring, absence of floor attendants and failure to detect the child's unsupervised movement across floors. It also cited "easily scalable" railings and alleged violations of school-building norms.

The report highlighted non-compliance with child protection guidelines, absence of psychological support and inadequate storage of CCTV footage. The CBSE said the school's mechanisms were "entirely non-responsive," calling the failures a serious breach of mandated safety norms. Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support *—PTI*

AIR SHOW TURNS FATAL

In this screenshot from a third party video, smoke billows out after a fighter jet Tejas of the Indian Air Force crashed during an aerial display at the Dubai Air Show. *PHOTO: PTI*

Pilot tried to steer the jet away from crowd: Eyewitness

DUBAI/NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

Eyewitnesses at the Dubai Air Show said the Indian Air Force Tejas pilot appeared to steer his aircraft away from packed spectator stands moments before it crashed and burst into flames on Friday, killing him.

Their accounts suggest he tried to avoid mass casualties as the jet lost altitude during an aerial display.

Indian expat Shajudheen Jabbar told Gulf News he believed the pilot made a deliberate final turn "from the way the flight turned before it went down".

Local media reported alarm as the aircraft plunged into a rubble-strewn area near Al Maktoum International Airport.

Another resident, Winston Lobo, said the impact shook the nearby community. "I heard a loud bang... The jet went down in a rubble area very close to our area," he said.

The 2025 Dubai Air Show, hosting more than 1,500 exhibitors and 148,000 industry professionals from 150 countries, resumed flying displays about 90 minutes later, according to AP.

The Russian Knights performed overhead even as emergency crews worked at the crash site, with police vehicles, firefighters and an Indian diplomatic SUV nearby.

Two IAF squadrons, 45 and 18, operate the LCA Tejas, each fielding 16–18 jets. India is expanding its fleet under a Rs 48,000-crore order for 83 Tejas Mk-1A jets placed in 2021 and a 2023 approval for 97 more. *— PTI*

Many patients who travelled long distances, unaware of the protest, voiced frustration and urged the Health Department to intervene *PHOTO: ANI*

Kerala doctors' strike disrupts colleges

T'PURAM, 21 NOV

A strike by a section of government doctors in Kerala continued to disrupt operations at State medical colleges on Friday, with out-patient (OP) services largely unavailable. Many patients who travelled long distances, unaware of the protest, voiced frustration and urged the Health Department to intervene.

A man outside Kozhikode medical college said he had stayed in a rented room to consult a doctor for his wife's serious illness but learnt of the strike only on arrival. Another patient said low-income groups depend on medical colleges, and any disruption hits poor families the hardest.

The protest, led by the Kerala Government Medical College Teachers' Association (KGMCTA), has been ongoing for weeks.

While OP services and theory classes were hit, casualty and emergency units remained functional, officials said. KGMCTA members said talks with the government over long-pending issues including salary revision, arrears from 2016–2020, pay-structure corrections, and creation of new posts—remain unresolved. *— PTI*

Centre appoints CISF as seaport security regulator

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

The Centre has designated the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) as the security regulator for about 250 Indian seaports, marking a major shift in maritime security oversight, officials said on Friday.

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways issued the order on 18 November, CISF DIG Ajay Dahiya said. Calling it a significant reform, he said the decision aims to bolster port security as these facilities are crucial to trade, logistics and India's expanding Blue Economy.

The CISF is now recognised as a Security Organisation for seaports, effectively replacing the DG Shipping framework that previously handled the subject without a dedicated

security body, an official said. The force will conduct updated security assessments, prepare port-security plans and oversee primary duties at these facilities. Officials said a hybrid security model, enhanced screening systems and specialised training institutions are being introduced to support future-ready and efficient ports. India has about 250 small and intermediate ports, with only 65-68 operational. The CISF already secures 13 major ports. *—PTI*

Centre rehauls Labour code, Gig workers now recognised

The Centre on Friday announced the implementation of the four Labour Codes, the Code on Wages (2019), Industrial Relations Code (2020), Code on Social Security (2020), and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSHWC) Code (2020). The Codes, which take effect from 21 November 2025, replace 29 Central labour laws framed largely between the 1930s and 1950s, a period when India's economy and work structures were fundamentally different.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment said the new framework would modernise labour governance, widen social-security coverage and simplify compliance for industries long burdened by fragmented, outdated rules. Statutory rights such as minimum wages, timely wage payment and mandatory appointment letters will now extend to all workers, including those in the unorganised, gig and platform sectors. The Codes aim to promote formalisation, strengthen workplace safety and align labour regulation with global trends.

Under the Social Security Code, Employees' State Insurance (ESI) benefits will be available across the country and may apply even to establishments with a single employee engaged in hazardous work. Gig and platform workers are recognised as distinct categories for the first time, with aggregators required to contribute 1–2 per cent of annual turnover (capped at 5 per cent of payouts) to a dedicated social-security fund. A national floor wage will provide a uniform baseline across States.

Women will be allowed to work night shifts across all sectors, including mines and hazardous industries, subject to consent and safety measures. The Codes mandate equal wages and prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender, including against transgender persons.

Fixed-term employees will enjoy benefits equal to permanent workers and become eligible for gratuity after one year instead of five. Contract and migrant workers gain stronger protections through mandatory health benefits, social-security entitlements and portability. The OSHWC Code introduces free annual health check-ups for workers aged over 40 and establishes national safety standards. Working hours will remain capped at 8–12 per day and 48 per week.

To reduce compliance burden, the government has introduced single registration, single licence and single return systems. Labour inspections will shift to an inspector-cum-facilitator approach focused on guidance rather than punitive action. Dispute resolution is streamlined with two-member Industrial Tribunals and quicker escalation if conciliation fails. Existing rules under previous laws will continue during the transition until new rules are notified.

Gig and platform workers are recognised as distinct categories for the first time, with aggregators required to contribute 1–2 per cent of annual turnover to a dedicated social-security fund **PHOTO: PTI**

According to official estimates, social-security coverage has expanded from about 19 per cent of the workforce in 2015 to over 64 per cent in 2025. The government expects the new Codes to accelerate this expansion and improve alignment with international standards. While the Codes are framed as a balance between worker protection and industrial flexibility, trade unions have reiterated concerns about potential dilution of job security and collective-bargaining rights under the Industrial Relations Code.

Sector-wise benefits

Fixed-Term Employees (FTEs)

FTEs will receive the same benefits as permanent staff, including leave, medical cover and social security, and gratuity after one year. Equal wages are mandated, reducing excessive contractualisation and promoting direct hiring.

Gig and platform

Clear definitions of gig work, platform work and aggregators have been introduced. Aggregators must contribute to a social-security fund. Aadhaar-linked Universal Account Numbers will ensure frictionless, portable access to benefits across States.

Contract

Health and social-security benefits are the responsibility of the principal employer. FTE provisions enhance employability and ensure gratuity after one year. Free annual health check-ups are mandated.

Women

The Codes prohibit gender discrimination, guarantee equal pay, and allow women to work night shifts across all industries with consent and safety safeguards. Women's representation is mandatory in grievance redressal committees, and parents-in-law are now included in the family definition for dependant benefits.

Youth workers

Minimum wages are guaranteed for all, along with mandatory appointment letters. Wage payment during leave is compulsory. A Central floor wage ensures minimum living standards.

MSME

MSME employees will receive minimum wages, timely payments and access to welfare facilities such as canteens, drinking water and rest areas. Double overtime wages, standard working hours and paid leave are mandated.

Beedi and cigar

Minimum wages, capped working hours (8–12 per day; 48 per week) and consent-based overtime at double wages are ensured. Workers receive timely wage payment and become eligible for bonus after 30 days of work.

Plantation workers

Plantations with more than 10 workers or over 5 hectares fall under the new Codes. Mandatory safety training, protective equipment, full ESI medical facilities and education support for workers' children are provided.

Audio-visual and digital media

Journalists, dubbing artists and stunt performers gain formal recognition, mandatory appointment letters and timely wage payments. Overtime requires consent and must be paid at double the rate.

Mine workers

Certain commuting accidents are treated as employment-related. National safety standards and free annual health check-ups are mandated, with working-hour limits fixed at 8–12 per day and 48 per week.

Hazardous industry

Annual health check-ups and national safety standards will apply. Women may work in hazardous sectors, including underground mining. Safety committees are compulsory at each site.

Textile

Migrant workers receive equal wages, welfare entitlements and PDS portability. Workers may raise claims for up to three years. Double wages for overtime are mandated.

IT and ITES

Salaries must be released by the 7th of every month. Equal pay provisions are strengthened. Women may work night shifts with safety measures. Wage and harassment disputes will be resolved swiftly.

Dock

All dock workers receive formal recognition, social security, appointment letters, employer-funded annual health check-ups and access to medical and sanitation facilities.

Export sector

Fixed-term workers will receive gratuity, provident fund and other benefits. Annual leave is available after 180 days of service. Timely wage payment without unauthorised deductions is mandatory.

Women may work night shifts with written consent and safety measures including transport, CCTV and security. *—PTI*

SALAR ساڈا

My heart is full: Gavai as SC bar bids him farewell

Outgoing Chief Justice of India BR Gavai on Friday said he was leaving the Supreme Court "with a full sense of satisfaction and contentment", concluding a legal and judicial career spanning nearly four decades. Delivering an emotional address during his farewell sitting before a ceremonial bench, also comprising CJI-designate Surya Kant and Justice K Vinod Chandran, Justice Gavai said he departs the institution as a "student of justice".

"After listening to all of you, particularly the poems of the Attorney General and Kapil Sibal, and the warm sentiments expressed by everyone, my voice is choking with emotions," he said, speaking in a packed courtroom of law officers, senior advocates and young lawyers. "When I leave this courtroom for the last time, I do so with a full sense of satisfaction that I have done whatever I could have done for this country."

Justice Gavai, the second Dalit and first Buddhist Chief Justice after KG Balakrishnan, was sworn in on 14 May for a tenure of a little over six months. He will demit office on 23 November, with Friday marking his last working day.

Reflecting on his professional journey, Justice Gavai said, "When I joined the profession in 1985, I entered the school of law. Today, as I demit the office, I do so as a student of justice." Describing his rise from lawyer to high court judge, Supreme Court judge and finally CJI as "deeply satisfying", he stressed that every public office must be viewed "not as one of power, but as an opportunity to serve society and the nation".

He said his judicial philosophy had been shaped by his admiration for BR Ambedkar and by the influence of his father, a politician who had worked closely with the Constitution's chief architect. He said he consistently sought to balance fundamental rights with the Directive Principles of State Policy, noting that many of his judgments attempted to harmonise constitutional freedoms with the imperatives of sustainable development and environmental protection.

Quoting the judicial principle that "a judge must not alter the material but may iron out the creases", Justice Gavai said this approach guided his work. On his writing style, he remarked, "I always believe that judgments should be written for the end consumers. I do not have a flair for academics or literature." He highlighted his longstanding association with environmental, ecological and wildlife matters, saying, "In all these years, I tried to protect the rights of citizens while ensuring that the environment and wildlife were preserved."

Chief Justice of India BR Gavai speaks during his farewell function ahead of his demission of office in New Delhi **PHOTO: PTI**

- Asked Justice Gavai, the second Dalit and first Buddhist Chief Justice after KG Balakrishnan, was sworn in on 14 May for a tenure of a little over six months. He will demit office on 23 November, with Friday marking his last working day. He was elevated as an additional judge of the Bombay High Court on 14 November, 2003, and became a permanent judge in 2005.

On administering the Supreme Court, he said, "All decisions I took as CJI were taken collectively. I believed we must function as an institution."

CJI-designate Surya Kant paid heartfelt tribute, saying, "He was more than a colleague; he was my brother and a confidant, a man of immense integrity." Justice Kant recalled Justice Gavai's patience, dignity and encouragement to young lawyers. "His firmness was always laced with humour. Not a single day went by when he didn't threaten an insistent lawyer with costs, but he never imposed one."

Attorney General R Venkataramani said the Marathi meaning of "Bhushan"—ornament—aptly captured how Justice Gavai had adorned the judiciary. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta recalled meeting him as a puisne judge and said, "You never changed as a human being." Mehta praised the "fresh breeze of Indianness" in recent judgments, noting that the Constitution Bench decision on governors was grounded in indigenous jurisprudence. "A judgment should be a judgment, not an article for a law review," he added.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal said the outgoing CJI's elevation symbolised the "enormous social churning" India has undergone. He praised Justice Gavai for rising to the highest judicial office while retaining the simplicity of a common man.

Justice Gavai was elevated as an additional judge of the Bombay High Court on 14 November, 2003 and became a permanent judge in November 2005. He joined the Supreme Court on 24 May 2019. Before his judicial career, he joined the Bar in March 1985 and served as standing counsel for the Municipal Corporation of Nagpur, Amravati Municipal Corporation and Amravati University.

As the proceedings drew to a close, Justice Gavai thanked the Bar, the Bench and the institution. "I always believe that everybody, every judge, every lawyer, is governed by the principles that guide our Constitution: equality, justice, liberty and fraternity. I tried to discharge my duties within the four corners of the Constitution that is so dear to all of us."

He left the packed courtroom to a standing ovation, closing a chapter marked by humility, constitutional fidelity and what his colleagues described as an unwavering commitment to justice. *—PTI*

LETTERS

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Don pushes Ukraine to cede land, renounce NATO in peace plan

US President Donald Trump's 28-point draft proposal to end Russia's war in Ukraine has been formally presented to officials in Kyiv. The document, jointly shaped by negotiators from Washington and Moscow, outlines terms that lean heavily in Moscow's favour — including Kyiv ceding territory, formally abandoning its NATO aspirations, and accepting strict military and constitutional constraints.

The Associated Press obtained a copy of the full draft on Thursday. The proposal, detailed below, sets out political, security, territorial, economic and humanitarian terms for a settlement, and envisages Trump heading a "Peace Council" to guarantee implementation.

The Proposal

1. Ukraine's sovereignty will be confirmed.
2. A comprehensive non-aggression pact will be concluded between Russia, Ukraine and Europe, settling all past ambiguities.
3. Russia pledges not to invade neighbouring states, while NATO commits to no further enlargement.
4. A US-mediated Russia–NATO dialogue will tackle security issues, promote de-escalation, and create conditions for stability and future economic cooperation.
5. Ukraine will receive credible and reliable security guarantees.
6. Ukraine's armed forces will be capped at 6,00,000 personnel.
7. Ukraine will amend its Constitution to permanently renounce NATO membership; NATO will amend its statutes to bar Ukraine's entry in future.
8. NATO will agree not to station troops in Ukraine.
9. European fighter jets will be based in Poland.
10. The United States will extend a formal guarantee to Ukraine under the following terms:
- The US will receive compensation for the guarantee.
- If Ukraine invades Russia, the guarantee is void.
- If Russia invades Ukraine, sanctions will return in full, territorial recognitions will be revoked, and a decisive coordinated military response will be undertaken.
- If Ukraine launches an unprovoked missile strike on Moscow or St Petersburg, the guarantee becomes invalid.

11. Ukraine becomes eligible for EU membership and will receive short-term preferential access to the European market.
12. A global reconstruction package will be launched, including:
- A Ukraine Development Fund targeting high-growth sectors such as technology, data centres, and artificial intelligence; US–Ukraine cooperation to rebuild and operate gas pipelines and storage, joint rehabilitation of war-affected regions; Development of mineral and natural-resource projects; A World Bank special financing package to accelerate reconstruction.

13. Russia will be gradually reintegrated into the global economy, including:
- Staged, conditional lifting of sanctions.
- A long-term US–Russia economic cooperation agreement covering energy, natural resources, infrastructure, AI, data centres, Arctic rare-earth projects and other investments.
- A US invitation for Russia to rejoin the G8.

14. Frozen funds will be allocated as follows:
- USD 100 billion of frozen Russian assets will go to US-led reconstruction efforts in Ukraine.
- The US will receive 50 per cent of profits from this investment.
- Europe will contribute USD 100 billion for Ukrainian reconstruction; frozen European assets will be released.
- Remaining Russian frozen funds will be placed in a joint US–Russia investment vehicle to build long-term shared interests and deter future conflict.

15. A US–Russia security working group will supervise implementation.
16. Russia will legislate a binding policy of non-aggression towards Europe and Ukraine.
17. The US and Russia will extend nuclear non-proliferation and control treaties, including START I.
18. Ukraine will remain a non-nuclear state under the NPT.
19. The Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant will resume operations under IAEA supervision, with electricity split 50:50 between Russia and Ukraine.
20. Both countries will adopt educational and cultural programmes to foster tolerance and reject racism and prejudice.
- Ukraine will adopt EU rules on religious tolerance and minority-language protection.
- Discriminatory measures will be abolished on both sides, ensuring media and educational freedoms.
- All Nazi ideology and activity will be outlawed.

21. Territories will be settled as follows:
- Crimea, Luhansk and Donetsk will be recognised as de facto Russian, including by the US.
- Kherson and Zaporizhzhia will be frozen along the existing line of contact, constituting de facto recognition of that line.
- Russia will relinquish other agreed territories outside the five regions.
- Ukraine will withdraw from Ukrainian-held areas of Donetsk Oblast to form a neutral demilitarised buffer zone internationally recognised as Russian territory. Russian forces will not enter this zone.

22. Both Russia and Ukraine commit not to alter territorial arrangements by force. Violations void security guarantees.
23. Russia will permit Ukraine's use of the Dnieper River for commercial activity and ensure free grain transport through the Black Sea.
24. A humanitarian committee will address wartime issues:
- Full exchange of prisoners and remains on an "all for all" basis.
- Return of all civilian detainees, hostages and children.
- Family reunification programmes.
- Measures to support conflict victims.

25. Ukraine will hold national elections within 100 days.
26. Full amnesty for all parties for wartime actions; no future claims or complaints will be pursued.
27. The agreement will be legally binding and overseen by a Peace Council chaired by Donald J. Trump. Violations will trigger sanctions.
28. A ceasefire will take effect once all parties sign and both sides pull back to designated points. *—PTI*

US President Donald Trump with his Ukrainian and Russian counterparts Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Vladimir Putin **PHOTO: ANI**

PHOTO: PTI

Typhoon Kalmaegi kills at least 41 in Vietnam

HANOI, 21 NOV

Torrential rains have triggered severe flooding and landslides across central Vietnam, leaving 41 people dead, according to authorities cited by Al Jazeera. Rescue teams are still operating in the affected areas, trying to save residents trapped on the rooftops of submerged houses. Over the past three days, rainfall in several parts of the region has surpassed 150 cm. The area, known for its major coffee- growing zones and popular beach destinations, has been heavily impacted. Around 52,000 homes have been flooded, forcing nearly 62,000 people to evacuate. Landslides have rendered several key roads impassable. Typhoon Kalmaegi was forecast to move west-north westward and make landfall over central Vietnam Thursday.—*ANI*

Armed men abduct kids at another school in Nigeria

ABUJA, 21 NOV

Armed men attacked a Catholic school in a western region of Nigeria and abducted several schoolchildren and staff early Friday, days after 25 schoolgirls were abducted in a neighbouring state, officials said. The attack and abductions took place at St Mary's School, a Catholic institution in Agwara local government's Papiri community, said Abubakar Usman, the Secretary to the Niger state government. He did not disclose the number of students and staff abducted. Local media broadcaster Arise TV said 52 schoolchildren were abducted. The Niger State Police Command said the abductions took place in the early hours of Friday and that military and security forces have since been deployed to the community. —*PTI*

IS backed rebels kill 89 in eastern Congo: UN

GOMA, 21 Nov

An Islamic State-backed rebel group killed 89 people in many villages in eastern Congo, the UN peacekeeping mission said Friday. In the village of Byambwe, around 60 km west of Lubero, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) killed 17 people in a hospital on Saturday, including 11 women receiving care in a maternity ward."Violence committed against civilians, including in medical facilities, may constitute war crimes," said Bruno Lemarquis, the acting head of the UN mission, MONUSCO. The attacks by ADF took place in the Bapere and Baswaghga, in the Lubero territory of North Kivu province, between 13 and 19 November. It owes allegiance to Islamic State—*PTI*

France to probe Grok for denying Holocaust

PARIS, 21 NOV

The French government is taking action against artificial intelligence chatbot Grok, which was launched by a company owned by billionaire Elon Musk, after it generated French-language posts that questioned the use of gas chambers at Auschwitz and listed Jewish public figures, officials said.Grok, built by Musk company xAI and integrated into X, said in a widely shared post in French that gas chambers at the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp were designed for "disinfection with Zyklon B against typhus." The Auschwitz Memorial highlighted the exchange on X, and said that the response distorted historical facts.Grok has a history of making antisemitic comments. Earlier this year, Musk's company took down posts from the chatbot that praised Adolf Hitler. —*PTI*

US sanctions 17, including Indians, over Iranian oil

India's RN Ship Management & TR6 Petro India to be hit

NEW YORK/ WASHINGTON, 21 NOV

PHOTO: FREEPIK

The Trump administration has sanctioned entities and individuals from India involved in sales of Iran's petroleum and petroleum products, saying the funds from this trade support Tehran's regional terrorist proxies and procure weapons systems that are "a direct threat" to the US.

The Departments of State and Treasury sanctioned shipping networks responsible for funding the Iranian regime's "malign activities" through illicit oil sales, as well as an airline and its affiliates that arm and supply Iran-backed terrorist groups.

Among those added to the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control Specially Designated Nationals List are Indian nationals Zair Husain Iqbal Husain Sayed, Zulfikar Hussain Rizvi Sayed, Maharashtra-based RN Ship Management Private Limited and Pune-based TR6 Petro India LLP.

The State Department is designating 17 entities, individuals, and vessels in several countries, including, but not limited to India, Panama, and the Seychelles, involved in Iran's petroleum and petroleum products sales, the administration said.

Concurrently, the Department of the Treasury is designating 41 entities, individuals, vessels, and aircraft, intensifying its efforts against Iran's petroleum and petrochemical exports and disrupting financial streams and commercial operatives that support Iran's malign activities.

The administration said TR6 Petro, an India-based petroleum products trader, imported over USD 8 million worth of Iranian-origin bitumen from multiple companies between October 2024 and June 2025.

The Iranian regime continues to fuel conflict in the Middle East to fund its destabilising activities, the State Department said. This behaviour enables Iran to fund its nuclear escalations, support terrorist groups, and disrupt the flow of trade and freedom of navigation in waterways that are crucial to global prosperity and economic growth. —*PTI*

We disagree, but will work together: Mamdani on Trump

NEW YORK, 21 NOV

New York City Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani stated his Friday meeting with President Trump will focus on the city's affordability crisis, calling it "an opportunity to make the case for New Yorkers." The White House discussion is scheduled for 3pm (local time).

Speaking at City Hall Park, Mamdani said his team sought the meeting "because I will work with anyone to make life more affordable for the more than 8.5 million people who call this city home."

"I have many disagreements with the President, and I believe that we should be relentless and pursue all avenues and all meetings that could make our city affordable for every single New Yorker," he said.

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said Trump is ready to meet anyone —*ANI*

Seditious behaviour, punishable by death: Trump to Dems

US President Donald Trump said on Truth Social that Democrats had displayed "seditious behaviour, punishable by death" when responding to video a video of Democrat lawmakers who had served in the military criticising the Republican President. "Lock them up?" he asked in other post while reposting"hang them, like George Washington would." —*PTI*

Coast Guard to call swastikas, nooses 'potentially divisive'

The US Coast Guard is poised to change some of its language and policies surrounding the display of hate symbols like swastikas and nooses as well as how personnel report hate incidents. The policy dated this month calls symbols like swastikas and nooses "potentially divisive, as opposed to the prior "a potential hate incident." —*PTI*

Countries enforcing DEI are violating human rights: US

Countries enforcing race or gender diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) policies will now be at risk of the Trump administration deeming them as infringing on human rights for the government's annual rights report. The new State Department instructions also deem countries that subsidise abortion or facilitate migration as infringing on human rights. —*PTI*

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy meets US Secretary of the Army Daniel Driscoll in Kyiv on Thursday PHOTO: X @ZELENSKYYUA

Zelenskyy in a tight spot amid Trump's new threat

KYIV, 21 NOV

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Friday acknowledged that Kyiv faces an extraordinarily difficult choice as it weighs a US-backed peace proposal, warning the nation may have to choose between "losing its dignity" or risking the loss of its "key partner".

"This is one of the most difficult moments in our history," he said in a video address, adding that US pressure on Ukraine was now "one of the hardest" it has faced.

5 people were killed in Ukraine on Friday when a Russian glide bomb struck a high-rise building.

According to AP, Washington has given Zelenskyy until Thursday to respond to its 28-point peace plan, though an extension on finalising the terms is possible. US officials have privately warned that intelligence sharing and weapons supplies could be cut if Kyiv declines the proposal, sources familiar with the discussions said.

Zelenskyy met US Secretary of the Army Daniel Driscoll in Kyiv on Thursday, where the plan was formally presented. He later said Ukraine was ready to work "constructively, honestly and swiftly" with Washington. "Our teams of Ukraine and the US will work on the provisions to end the war," he said, adding that he expects to speak with President Donald Trump soon.

The proposal includes elements Ukraine has previously rejected, including land concessions. It requires Kyiv to surrender areas of Donetsk still under its control, reduce the size of its armed forces, and pledge not to join NATO.

"We are fully aware of the American strength," Zelenskyy said. The European Union has voiced strong reservations. EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said any settlement must reflect the positions of both Ukraine and the EU, warning the framework offered "no concessions" from Moscow. France meanwhile cautioned against "capitulation". —*PTI*

MISS WORLD

Fatima Bosch Fernandez of Mexico was crowned Miss Universe 2025 on Friday. The 25-year-old was at the centre of the 74th beauty pageant in Bangkok, having stood up to bullying and heckling from one of the hosts, who called her 'dumb' PHOTO: PTI

6 killed in 5.7 magnitude earthquake in Bangladesh

DHAKA, 21 NOV

At least six people were killed and several injured as a massive earthquake of magnitude 5.7 jolted Dhaka and parts of Bangladesh on Friday, damaging buildings, causing fires at several places and sending panic among residents.

Three people in Old Dhaka's Armanitola area were killed after a railing, bamboo scaffolding and debris of a five-storey building fell on them. A bystander was critically wounded.

One of the deceased was a medical student who was there to buy meat along with his mother, who was critically wounded.

The three deceased was an eight-year-old who had not been identified.

The other two deaths were reported from Narsingdi, where the epicentre was located some 10 kilometres beneath the surface.

A newborn baby on her mother's lap died in Narayanganj as they were walking near a wall that collapsed as the tremor hit.

Damaged buildings in Dhaka in the aftermath of the massive earthquake that shook Bangladesh on Friday PHOTO: ANI

The earthquake also resulted in tilting of two highrise buildings in Dhaka. Fires were also reported in a few places, though fire fighters were yet to confirm if they were related to the earthquake.

Experts have long said the risk of major quakes was high in Bangladesh because of its location on active tectonic plate boundaries, with many of them saying a major earthquake is inevitable. —*PTI*

Boiler explosion kills 20 in Pakistan's Punjab

LAHORE, 21 NOV

At least 20 people were killed and several injured when the boiler of a factory exploded in the Punjab province of Pakistan on Friday, an official said here. The incident took place today morning in the Faisalabad district of Punjab, 130 kms from Lahore.

Faisalabad Deputy Commissioner Raja Jahangir Anwar told reporters that due to the boiler explosion in a chemical factory in the Malikpur area nearby buildings collapsed.

"So far, the rescue teams have recovered 20 bodies from the rubble and seven injured have been shifted to hospital," Anwar said.

"It is feared that more people are under the debris. The rescue teams are removing the rubble. The district machinery is taking part in the rescue work," the commissioner said.

In a statement, Punjab Inspector General of Police Dr Usman Anwar directed that Rescue 1122, the fire brigade and all related agencies be provided full support. —*PT*

S Africa won't hand over G20 baton to US' 'junior official'

JOHANNESBURG, 21 NOV

South Africa has decided not to hand over the annual G20 Presidency to a "junior" US official at the end of the leaders' summit, even as a White House official cautions President Cyril Ramaphosa over "running his mouth" against his American counterpart Donald Trump.

Ramaphosa adopted a conciliatory approach on Thursday evening after the US requested accreditation for an eight-member team led by US chargé d'affaires, Marc Dillard, to receive the baton on Sunday.

However, Ramaphosa's spokesman, Vincent Magwenya, said that the President will not hand over the G20 Presidency to a junior official.

"It's a breach of established protocol. No head of state and government anywhere in the world would do it," Magwenya told local media.

There was also anger in South Africa White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt remarks, which analysts said was a breach of protocol in insulting the President.

"I saw the South African President running his mouth a little bit against the US and Trump and that language is not appreciated by the President," Leavitt said after Ramaphosa had taken a hard line on the US absence. —*PTI*

Nepal's Gen Z groups protest against former prime minister KP Sharma Oli in Kathmandu on Friday PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

CAUSE STILL UNKNOWN

Fire at Brazil COP30 Summit injures 21

BELEM, 21 NOV

At least 21 people were injured in a fire which broke out at the main venue of the ongoing UN COP30 Climate Summit in Brazil's Belem, forcing thousands of people to run for safety.

The fire broke out at around 2pm on Thursday at the 'Blue Zone', where all meetings, negotiations, country pavilions, media centre and offices of all high-profile dignitaries are housed, including the main plenary hall.

As soon as news of the fire spread, people ran out of all exit gates for safety. The authorities closed the venue for a thorough safety inspection and reopened it after more than six hours at 8:40 pm, sans the country pavilions -- the area which caught fire.

Flames engulf pavilions at the COP30 Climate Summit, 2025 in Belem in Brazil on Thursday PHOTO: PTI

Of the 21 cases, 19 were related to smoke inhalation and two to anxiety episodes following the incident. There have been no reports of individuals sustaining burn injuries from the flames, it added.

"12 have already been discharged," the Brazilian Health Ministry said.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres was present at the venue and promptly evacuated. India's Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav was also present and he and other officials safely exited the venue.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) said that following a comprehensive safety assessment, the venue was thoroughly inspected and deemed fully safe—*PTI*

CLASHES ERUPT AS GEN Z PROTESTS MOVE TO KATHMANDU

KATHMANDU, 21 NOV

Nepal's Gen Z groups and the supporters of CPN-UML led by deposed prime minister KP Sharma Oli once again came face to face in capital Kathmandu on Friday, days after clashes between them led to curfew in Bara district.

Dozens of injured youths belonging to a Gen Z group on Friday staged a sit-in at Maitighar Mandala in Kathmandu to protest against Oli, whom they hold responsible for the 8 September crackdown against protesters where 76 people were killed.

The Friday protests were held following a CPN-UML rally in the nearby Baneshwor- Babarmahal area, where the party's chief Oli urged the National Volunteers Force to give protection to UML leaders and cadres.

Both the programmes by UML cadres and Gen Z youths were organised at the same time in almost the same venue, with the presence of a large number of riot policemen providing security to avoid any clash.

Meanwhile, the curfew was lifted in Bara district on Friday.

While other political parties adopted a soft attitude towards the Gen Z and welcomed the general election on 5 March, Oli's party has opposed it. —*PTI*

Gold declines ₹600 to ₹1.26L/10g

NEW DELHI, 30 OCT

Gold prices declined by Rs 600 to Rs 1,26,100 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday, tracking a weak global trend, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal of 99.5 per cent purity depreciated by Rs 600 to Rs 1,25,500 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). In the local bullion, silver prices also tumbled by Rs 2,000 to Rs 1,56,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes). On the global front, spot gold was trading 0.38 per cent lower at USD 4061.91 per ounce while silver futures fell by 2.13 per cent to USD 49.56 per ounce. *—PTI*

Sebi to facilitate inclusion of REITs in market indices

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

Sebi will work with industry stakeholders to enable the inclusion of real estate investment trusts (REITs) in market indices, a move expected to significantly boost liquidity, chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said on Friday. Addressing the National Conclave on REITs and InvITs – 2025, Pandey said Sebi would "work with all stakeholders" to advance index inclusion, which he said would naturally enhance liquidity for these instruments. REITs, which own and operate income-generating real estate, offer investors exposure to high-value property assets along with dividend income. Pandey added that Sebi is considering further steps to ease doing business for REITs and infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs), including expanding the range of liquid mutual fund schemes they can invest in. The regulator is also examining whether private InvITs may be permitted to invest in greenfield projects with adequate safeguards He said Sebi is engaging with institutional investors and coordinating with the Finance Ministry and states to accelerate public asset monetisation.*—PTI*

Maruti Suzuki buys 8% stake in tech startup Ravity

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

Maruti Suzuki India has acquired an 8 per cent stake in Ravity Software Solutions, a tech-led startup specialising in connected mobility insights. The automaker invested around Rs 2 crore through the Maruti Suzuki Innovation Fund, giving it a 7.84 per cent share. This is the fund's third investment, following similar amounts in Amlgo Labs in 2024 and Sociograph Solutions in 2022. MD & CEO Hisashi Takeuchi said startups bring agility and innovation that help enhance customer experience through data-driven solutions. Ravity founder Vikas Rungta said the company's expertise in AI, analytics and mobility will support Maruti Suzuki's trust and vision. Maruti Suzuki shares rose 1.8 per cent to Rs 16,083.20 on Friday. *—PTI*

Ather Energy expands product offering in Lanka

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

Ather Energy has expanded its product range in Sri Lanka, one of its fastest-growing international markets. The electric two-wheeler maker, which entered the country in December 2024, launched its family scooter, the Rizta, at the Colombo Motor Show 2025 in partnership with authorised distributor Evolution Auto Pvt Ltd. Ather said the launch marks the next phase of its global growth strategy, focused on strengthening its portfolio in key overseas markets. Chief Business Officer Ravneet Singh Phokela noted that Sri Lanka has quickly become an important market, and the Rizta is well-suited to local needs. Ather first expanded internationally to Nepal in November 2023. *—PTI*

Reliance ends Russian oil use at Jamnagar refinery

This is to comply with the EU sanctions against Russia

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

Russia currently supplies around a third of India's crude oil *PHOTO: RELIANCE INDUSTRIES LIMITED*

Reliance Industries Ltd has halted the use of Russian crude oil at its export-only refinery in the Jamnagar complex, Gujarat, as it moves to comply with European Union sanctions that bar the import of fuels derived from Russian oil from January 2026.

Reliance, India's largest buyer of Russian crude, processes the discounted barrels into petrol, diesel and aviation turbine fuel (ATF) at its twin-refinery Jamnagar complex. The site consists of a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) refinery dedicated to exports to markets such as the EU and the United States, and an older domestic-focused unit.

With the EU tightening restrictions on Russian energy revenues, Reliance has stopped processing Russian crude at the SEZ unit. The firm said existing inventories, built up before the shift, are being processed, but once exhausted, only non-Russian crude will be used. "From 1 December, all product exports from the SEZ refinery will be obtained from non-Russian crude oil," the company said, adding that the transition was completed ahead of schedule.

The move follows recent US sanctions on Russia's largest oil exporters, Rosneft and Lukoil.

Reliance, which has extensive business interests in the US, had earlier said it would comply with all applicable restrictions and was reviewing operational implications after the EU, UK and US tightened rules on Russian crude and refined products.

The company confirmed that its SEZ crude imports are fully segregated from its domestic-tariff-area (DTA) refinery. All pre-committed liftings of Russian crude as of 22 October 2025 are being honoured, with the final cargo loaded on 12 November.

Any Russian shipments arriving on or after 20 November are being diverted to the DTA refinery.

Reliance has a 25-year deal with Rosneft for up to 500,000 barrels per day but has already been cutting Russian purchases since the EU announced its 18th sanctions package in July. Industry sources said the company has been "recalibrating" imports to other regions, a process likely to accelerate now.

Russia currently supplies around a third of India's crude, averaging 1.7 mbd in 2025, with private refiners Reliance and Nayara Energy taking the bulk. *—PTI*

MF HOUSES BUY STAKES

Adani sells remaining 7% stake in AWL

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

Adani Group has sold its remaining 7 per cent stake in Adani Wilmar Ltd (AWL) in a block deal that attracted strong institutional demand.

Domestic mutual fund houses, including Vanguard, Charles Schwab, ICICI Prudential MF, SBI Mutual Fund, Tata MF, Quant MF, and Bandhan MF, bought the stake, according to people familiar with the transaction.

Several international investors from Singapore, the UAE, and other Asian markets also bought into the clean-out block.

Market sources add that Wilmar's long-term institutional partners, like GIC are expected to increase their exposure to AWL as the promoter structure stabilises.

Earlier this week, the Adani Group had sold a 13 per cent stake in AWL to bring its exposure down to 7 per cent.

AWL Agri Business Ltd (formerly Adani Wilmar Ltd) has completed a major shareholder reshaping after Adani Enterprises fully exited its 44 per cent stake, including the final 7 per cent clean-out block placed on November 20 at Rs 275 per share. The total realisation for Adani Enterprises stands at Rs 15,707 crore.

With the exit now complete, Singapore-based Wilmar International becomes the sole promoter with an estimated 57 per cent holding, giving AWL a clear multinational ownership profile.

AWL, which markets the "Fortune" brand – India's largest edible oil franchise – also operates an integrated food staples business across wheat flour, rice, pulses, and ready-to-cook products.

Analysts note that the company's business fundamentals remain strong, supported by Wilmar's global sourcing network and AWL's deep domestic distribution. *—PTI*

VIA EQUITY SHARES

IndiGo invests USD 820M in aircraft subsidiary

MUMBAI, 21 NOV

IndiGo has approved an investment of USD 820 million (around Rs 7,270 crore) in its wholly owned subsidiary, InterGlobe Aviation Financial Services IFSC Private Limited, to support aircraft acquisitions.

The airline said the funding will be provided through a mix of equity shares and 0.01 per cent non-cumulative optionally convertible redeemable preference shares (OCRPS), issued in one or more tranches.

The subsidiary will use the capital to acquire aviation assets, allowing IndiGo to expand ownership of its aircraft. As of 21 November, IndiGo has 411 aircraft, with 365 operational and 46 grounded, according to planespotter.net. *—PTI*

OpenAI, Foxconn tie up for AI hardware design

TAIPEI, 21 NOV

OpenAI and Taiwan's Foxconn have agreed to jointly design and manufacture hardware for artificial intelligence data centres in the US, strengthening American AI infrastructure.

Under the partnership, Foxconn, a key manufacturer of Nvidia AI servers and Apple's iPhone, will co-design and develop AI data centre racks with OpenAI.

The products to be built at Foxconn's US facilities in Ohio and Texas include cabling, networking and power systems. OpenAI will receive early access to test and purchase the equipment.

The companies said the initial agreement carries no financial obligations or purchase commitments.

The deal comes as Foxconn diversifies beyond electronics assembly into electric vehicles and broader technology manufacturing.

OpenAI has committed USD 1.4 trillion to AI infrastructure and recently forged major partnerships with Nvidia, AMD and Broadcom to expand computing capacity.

The ChatGPT-maker, founded in 2015, is expected to reach USD 20 billion in annualised revenue this year and potentially "hundreds of billions" by 2030. *—PTI*

Sensex down 400 points on weak global trends

MUMBAI, 21 NOV

Snapping the two-day rally, Sensex and Nifty closed lower on Friday due to weak global trends and fading hopes of a rate cut by the US Federal Reserve in December.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 400.76 points or 0.47 per cent to settle at 85,231.92. Earlier, it tanked 444.84 points or 0.51 per cent to 85,187.84.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 124 points to 26,068.15. The index had rallied over 1 per cent or 282 points to trade above 26,000 in the previous two sessions.

Tata Steel, HCL Tech, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, Bharat Electronics and Eternal were the major losers on BSE.

However, Maruti, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles and ITC were among the gainers.

Analysts said better-than-expected US non-farm payroll data dampened expectations of a December rate cut by the US Federal Reserve. Worries about a bubble in AI-related shares also dampened sentiment globally. *—PTI*

FTA with India will boost trade, says Israel

TEL AVIV, 21 NOV

A proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between Israel and India will open up significant business opportunities for industries in both countries and boost trade and investment flows, Israeli Economy and Industry Minister Nir Barkat said.

He said that the two countries have signed terms of references (ToRs) on November 20 here to start negotiations.

Barkat said that both counties have decided not to include sensitive areas in the FTA negotiations.

"There are huge opportunities to boost trade and investments. We are going to see huge growth in business," Barkat said.

He added that many Israeli companies are interested in opening subsidiaries in India, which can act as a gateway to Asia for them.

"People are now understanding that there are big opportunities (in India) as tomorrow's India's is not the India of yesterday," he said, adding that India is well set to compete with China.

The elements of ToRs include market access for goods by eliminating tariff and non-tariff barriers, investment facilitation, simplification of customs procedures, increasing technology transfer, and easing norms to promote trade in services. *—PTI*

Hindalco New York plant faces second blaze in a month

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

Hindalco Industries, part of the Aditya Birla Group, reported that a fire broke out on Friday at its Novelis plant in Oswego, New York. The company confirmed that no injuries occurred, as all employees were safely evacuated.

The incident, which took place at around 8.45am (EDT) on 20 November, 2025, marks the second fire at the facility in just over two months. Multiple local fire departments responded swiftly, bringing the blaze under control. Crews are continuing to monitor the site.

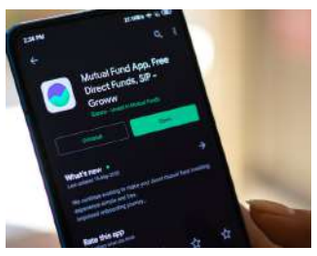
A previous fire on 16 September, 2025 had already forced a halt in production at the same plant. At that time, Hindalco said it was investigating the cause of the incident and assessing the impact on operations.

In its latest statement, the company noted that the Oswego plant is insured for property damage and business interruption, subject to policy terms and deductibles.

Novelis, Hindalco's US subsidiary, is a leading global producer of flat-rolled aluminium products and one of the world's largest recyclers of aluminium *—PTI*

Groww Q2 profit rises 12% to Rs 471 cr

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV



- However, revenue from operations declined to Rs 1,018.74 crore, down from Rs 1,125.4 crore in the previous year.

Billionbrains Garage Ventures, the parent company of the stock broking platform Groww, has announced a 12 per cent year-on-year increase in its consolidated net profit for the September quarter, reaching Rs 471.33 crore, up from Rs 420.16 crore in the same quarter last year

The profit growth was attributed to an expanding user base and strong asset growth.

However, revenue from operations declined to Rs 1,018.74 crore, down from Rs 1,125.4 crore in the previous year. The firm reported a 27 per cent increase in total transacting users, now at 19 million, while customer assets surged by 33 per cent to Rs 2.7 lakh crore, supported by robust inflows in mutual funds and equities.

Following its initial public offering on 12 November, which saw shares debut with a 31 per cent premium, the company plans to utilise IPO proceeds for technology development and business expansion. Shares of Billionbrains Garage Ventures finished the day up by 0.84 per cent, closing at Rs 157.93 on the BSE. -PTI

COURTROOM DRAMA

Google, US face-off over future of internet ads

NEW YORK, 21 NOV

Google will confront the US government's attempt to topple its internet empire in federal court on Friday as a judge considers how to prevent the abusive tactics that culminated in parts of its digital ad network being branded as an illegal monopoly.

The courtroom showdown in Alexandria, Virginia, will pit Google's lawyers and the US Department of Justice against each other in proceedings focused on the complex technology that distributes millions of digital ads each day.

After a trial last year, US District Judge Leonie Brinkema ruled in April that pieces of Google's ad technology had been rigged in a way that made it an illegal monopoly. That set up another 11-day trial earlier this fall to help Brinkema determine how to remedy its anti-competitive practices.

Friday's closing arguments will give both Google and the US Justice Department a final chance to sway Brinkema before she issues a ruling early next year.

The Justice Department wants Brinkema to force Google to sell some of the ad technology that it has spent nearly 20 years assembling, contending a breakup is the only way to rein in a company that the agency condemned as a "recidivist monopolist."

The condemnation refers not only to Google's practices in digital advertising but also to the illegal monopoly that it unleashed through its dominant search engine. Prosecutors also sought a breakup in the search monopoly case, but the judge rejected a proposal that would have required Google to sell its Chrome browser. *—PTI*

Toyota recalls 11,529 SUVs to fix issues in dashboards

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

Toyota Kirloskar Motor is recalling 11,529 units of its mid-sized SUV Urban Cruiser Hyryder to replace a dashboard component.

The voluntary recall campaign is intended to inspect and replace the Combination Meter, if found faulty, in 11,529 units manufactured between 9 December, 2024, and 29 April, 2025.

In line with its customer first philosophy and unwavering commitment to the highest quality standards, the automaker will continue to promptly address customer concerns and aim to deliver peace of mind by resolving issues quickly and conveniently, TKM said in a post on its Website.

Toyota dealer representatives will contact affected customers, it added.

In October, the company recalled Camry, Vellfire and Land Cruiser to re-programme the Parking Assist ECU software *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Deaflympics: Saini shoots down silver in 50m rifle 3P

TOKYO, 21 NOV

Young marksman Shourya Saini clinched the men's 50m rifle 3-positions silver medal as India's dominance in the shooting competition of Deaflympics continued here on Friday. Following Saini's second-place finish, India has increased its medal tally in shooting to 13, including four gold, six silver, and three bronze. The 22-year-old Saini, who had competed in the ISSF World Championships in Peru last year and had also qualified for the finals in the junior category before finishing seventh, aggregated 450.6 in the final on Friday to finish behind Germany's Matthias Erik Hess. Hess set a new deaf world record by scoring 459.8. The other Indian marksman in the finals, Kushagra Singh Rajawat, who had earlier won bronze in the 50m rifle prone, finished eighth. A dominant Saini came into the final on the back of a deaf world record qualification score of 584.—*PTI*

Messi's Inter Miami to open Miami stadium in April

MIAMI, 21 NOV

Lionel Messi and Inter Miami will play a Major League Soccer match in their new stadium for the first time on 4 April, one of the highlights of the league's schedule that was revealed. The 2026 MLS regular season starts 21 Feb. and runs through 7 Nov.It'll be the last season in the February-to-November model, with a shortened season planned for 2027 and then the new summer-to-spring calendar for the 2027-28 campaign to better align with other global leagues.—*PTI*

India A go down to Bangladesh A in Super Over

DOHA, 21 NOV

India paid a heavy price for their insipidness with bat and ball, succumbing to Bangladesh A in a Super Over in the semifinals of the Rising Stars Asia Cup here on Friday.Bangladesh A will face the winner of the second semifinal between Pakistan Shaheens and Sri Lanka A, to be played later in the day, in the final on Sunday.India A bowlers faltered in the business end as Bangladesh piled a handy 194 for six in 20 overs, and the Jitesh Sharma-led side too ended up at the same score, forcing a Super Over. However, India inexplicably decided to field Jitesh, Ashutosh Sharma, and Ramandeep Singh in the Super Over when they had Vaibhav Suryavanshi and Priyansh Arya in the dugout.—*PTI*

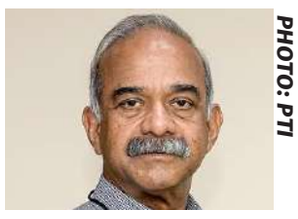


PHOTO: PTI

Kumar vows to make KSCA Stadium safer if elected

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

Shanth Kumar, who is contesting for the post of Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) President, stated that fans who flock to the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium deserve a better experience. "If elected, we want to make it a safe and better experience for fans who come to watch matches at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium. We will work hard to give them a high level of satisfaction, said in a press conference in Bengaluru on Friday. Kumar is part of 'Team Brijesh', backed by former India cricketer and administrator Brijesh. Shanth will compete against former India cricketer Prasad.—*PTI*

'Pitched battle' as India aim to draw level

South Africa will have their sights set on winning a Test series on Indian soil after 25 years

GUWAHATI, 21 NOV

Rishabh Pant will walk into an immensely challenging leadership exam in the absence of Shubman Gill as India face the uphill task of restoring parity against a well-prepared South Africa on a surface that is expected to offer appreciable turn in the second and final Test starting here on Saturday.

An even tougher test looms for head coach Gautam Gambhir, whose often perplexing calls have left the dressing room and think-tank grappling for clarity.

The second and final match of the two-match Test series between India and South Africa will be played in Guwahati from tomorrow.

The Indian team will be looking to secure a victory at any cost in this match to be played at the Barsapara Stadium.

On the other hand, after registering a historic 30-run victory in the Kolkata Test, South Africa will have their sights set on winning a Test series on Indian soil after 25 years.

The aura of invincibility while playing at home that accompanied the Indian teams of the last three decades has vanished when it comes to the current one, which is looking vulnerable.

India's KL Rahul bats during a training session ahead of the second Test cricket match between India and South Africa PHOTO: PTI

For the first time in many years, India is going into a home Test match as underdogs and not favourites. Ask any player worth his salt, and he would tell you that it is not a happy place to be.

Add to it a massive shift in mindset on tracks that implode, which has made matters worse.

While Gambhir, with the support of men who matter in the BCCI, is perfectly safe when it comes to his job but a 0-5 home record against two SENA countries will damage his coaching legacy forever, and no amount of ICC Trophies would be enough to paper over that aspect.

PHOTO: PTI

India and South Africa captains Rishabh Pant and Temba Bavuma at a press conference in Guwahati on Friday

Indisposed Gill released from the squad, Pant to lead

India captain Shubman Gill has officially been ruled out of the second Test against South Africa, due to begin on Saturday in Guwahati. Rishabh Pant will lead India in Gill's absence. "Unfortunately, he was not fully fit to feature in the 2nd Test and will head to Mumbai for further assessment of his injury." It remains to be seen if Gill can play the upcoming ODI series.

Rabada ruled out of second Test: Bavuma

South Africa's pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada has been ruled out of the second Test against India, beginning here on Saturday, as he has not fully recovered from the rib injury he suffered during a training session ahead of the series opener.

"Kagiso has been ruled out of the second Test," said Proteas skipper Temba Bavuma while giving an update on the pacer, who also missed the first Test in Kolkata, which the visitors won by 30 runs.

Bavuma added that the Guwahati track looked like a typical sub-continental wicket, which aids batting on the first couple of days and then becomes conducive for the slow bowlers. —*PTI*

INDIA VS SOUTH AFRICA

INDIA vs SOUTH AFRICA
Match starts at
9 am IST

HEAD TO HEAD AT GUWAHATI

PLAYED:	20
INDIA WON:	11
SA WON:	6
DRAW	3

Ashes: Starc takes career-best 7 wickets, Ben shines with 5

PERTH, 21 NOV

Mitchell Starc took a career-best 7-58 as Australia bundled England out for 172 despite losing the toss on Friday in the Ashes cricket series opener.Starc took a wicket in the first over of a test for the 24th time to set the tone, having Zac Crawley caught at slip by Usman Khawaja on the sixth delivery before England had scored a run.

Ben Stokes PHOTO: PTI

The 35-year-old left-armer snared three wickets in his first five overs, picking up his 100th career wicket, and had England in trouble at 105 for four at lunch on Day 1.

He took four more after the interval, including the key wicket of Ben Stokes, as England lost six wickets for 67 runs after lunch, the last five wickets tumbling for 12 runs to be all out in the second session.Ben Duckett (21) was punishing an off-rhythm Scott Boland's half-volleys at the other end to keep the runs flowing, punching four boundaries down the ground, before Starc trapped him lbw in the seventh over with a full-length ball.

The Ben Stokes show

Archer took the first two wickets and Brydon Carse took the next two to have Australia reeling at 31-4.

Travis Head and Green combined in a 45-run fourth-wicket stand to revive Australia's innings before Stokes broke through. He dismissed Head (21), Green (24), Alex Carey (26) and Starc (12) to rip through the middle order before getting Scott Boland (0) in the next-to-last over to return 5-23 in six overs for the day.Ben Stokes entered the series saying he was desperate to end England's 15-test winless streak in Australia. So far, it's advantage England.

Australia 123 for 9 (Stokes 5-23) trail England 172 (Brook 52, Pope 46, Starc 7-58) by 49 runs —*PTI*

Mitchell Starc PHOTO: PTI

FIFA SERIES

Smaller nations to expand in 2026 and add women's edition

LONDON, 21 NOV

The second "FIFA Series", sponsored biennial tournaments for mainly lower-ranked and lesser-financed nations, will expand in 2026 and launch a new women's edition, the global governing body said on Friday.

Though some games in the first 24-nation series in 2024 were sparsely attended, others did spark big fan interest, with more than 85,000 turning up for Egypt's tournament finale against Croatia in Cairo, which it lost 4-2.

Host nations for the larger 2026 men's series are Australia, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Mauritius, Puerto Rico, Rwanda, and Uzbekistan, FIFA said, with the final line-up of participants to be given early in the year.

The women's series will debut in Brazil, the Ivory Coast, and Thailand.

The aim is to benefit national teams lacking opportunities to play teams from other continents, with FIFA contributing to travel costs, accommodation, and other logistics.

"The FIFA Series is about unlocking development potential for players, coaches, and fans, while promoting football's universality and diversity through meaningful matches," FIFA president Gianni Infantino said in a statement.

Football Australia's interim CEO Heather Garriock welcomed the plans for next year's series. "These matches will play an essential role in preparing the CommBank Socceroos for the upcoming FIFA World Cup 2026 whilst also strengthening our international competitiveness as a whole," she said.

Illustrating the varied levels of interest in the series, in Sri Lanka in 2024, only 550 people turned up to see the Central African Republic beat Papua New Guinea 4-0. —*PTI*

Same India squads likely for NZ series and T20 World Cup

GUWAHATI, 21 NOV

The national selection committee led by Ajit Agarkar, in all likelihood, will select identical squads for the five-match T20I series against New Zealand and the marquee ICC T20 World Cup, a BCCI source said on Friday.

While the schedule of the global event is yet to be announced, the tentative start date for the 20-team tournament is 7 February.

The ICC tournament rules mandate teams to submit their final 15-member squad a month before the commencement of the tournament. The selection committee will announce their picks with an option to make changes till a specified cut-off date.

The same rule was in place too for the 2024 edition held in the Americas, which India won under Rohit Sharma's captaincy.

The New Zealand T20I series starts from January 21 and will be the last series before the T20 World Cup. "With only 10 T20Is left before the T20 World Cup, you won't see many changes happening in the squad proper unless someone is ruled out due to any specific injury," a source privy to development told PTI on condition of anonymity.—*PTI*

5 T20IS AGAINST NEW ZEALAND

- 21 January 2026 in Nagpur
- 23 January 2026 in Raipur
- 25 January 2026 in Guwahati
- 28 January 2026 in Vizag
- 31 January 2026 in Trivandrum

BCCI shifts key tournament from Delhi to Mumbai

NEW DELHI, 21 NOV

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has shifted the knockout stage of its annual men's Under-23 one-day tournament from Delhi to Mumbai, citing serious air-pollution concerns in the capital, according to reports. The decision affects the knockout segment of the competition, which was originally scheduled to be held in Delhi. Instead, the BCCI has verbally requested the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) to prepare to host all knockout fixtures from 25 November to 1 December —*PTI*

India's World Boxing Cup Finals sweep comes with caveats

GREATER NOIDA, 21 NOV

India's overwhelming success at the World Boxing Cup Finals glitters with gold, but is it truly reflective of a great performance? The answer is not as simple despite the home boxers' haul of record 20 medals.

The final tally included nine gold medals in an unprecedented show of strength on home turf.

It was a finale to the World Boxing Cup series launched by the sport's new governing body, World Boxing, earlier this year. Under the format, medallists from the three World Cups and the top-ranked pugilists across weight categories qualified directly for the quarterfinal stage.

However, only 15 women and 11 men ranked inside the top eight of their respective weight divisions participated. Powerhouses such as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan fielded second or even third-string squads, while countries like China and the USA skipped the competition entirely. —*PTI*

Social media can't make your day: Sania

BENGALURU, 21 NOV

"Social media cannot make or break your day," said six-time Grand Slam Champion Sania Mirza while speaking with Indian cricketer Richa Ghosh during a fireside chat at the Future Makers Conclave (FMC) in Bengaluru Tech Summit 2025.

Moderated by sports journalist Mayanti Langer, Mirza shared her hard-earned wisdom. "There are a couple of ways to handle it. She (Richa Ghosh) is still young, and my advice to her is just be somebody who has faced and grown up in an era where electronic media and social media were coming." But then electronic media started coming, and the tabloids started coming in. It started getting boring to talk just about forehands and backhands. —*PTI*

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

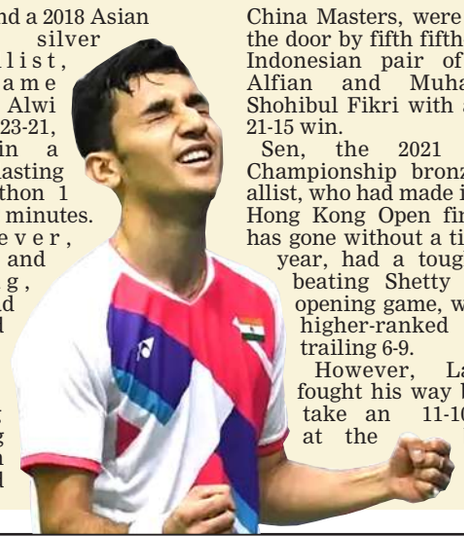
Lakshya overcomes Ayush to enter semis

SYDNEY, 21 NOV

Lakshya Sen overcame a resolute Ayush Shetty to secure a place in the men's singles semifinals, but it was curtains for top top-seeded Indian men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty at the Australian Open Super 500 tournament here on Friday.

Lakshya, seeded seventh, who had beaten the 20-year-old Shetty at the same stage in the Hong Kong Open earlier this year, won 23-21, 21-11 to set up a last-four clash against Chinese-Taipei's Chou Tien Chen, the second seed in the event.

Chou, ranked No. 9 in the world and a 2018 Asian Games silver medallist, overcame Farhan Alwi 13-21, 23-21, 21-16 in a match lasting a marathon 1 hour, 23 minutes.



However, Satwik and Chirag, who had reached the finals of the Hong Kong Open and China Masters, were shown the door by fifth fifth-seeded Indonesian pair of Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Shohibul Fikri with a 21-19, 21-15 win.

Sen, the 2021 World Championship bronze-medallist, who had made it to the Hong Kong Open final but has gone without a title this year, had a tough time beating Shetty in the opening game, with the higher-ranked Indian trailing 6-9.

However, Lakshya fought his way back to take an 11-10 lead at the break. Following a seesaw battle, the Almora shuttler managed a 19-17 advantage.

However, Ayush was the first one to take a game point before squandering it, as Lakshya finally closed out the opener after a few tense moments.

The second game of the 53-minute contest turned out to be a one-sided one with Sen taking an early 6-1 lead, which swelled to 15-7 in no time as Ayush's challenge wilted.

Sen is the only Indian remaining in men's singles after senior pros Prannoy and Kidambi Srikanth had made early exits on Thursday. —*PTI*

SHE SAID YES!

Star cricketer Smriti Mandhana got engaged on the very pitch where India lifted the World Cup trophy. Her longtime boyfriend, music composer Palash Muchhal, surprised her with the proposal while she was blindfolded and presented a diamond ring. The emotional moment took place at Mumbai's DY Patil Stadium PHOTO: PTI